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PETER—APOCALYPTIC SEER:
THE INFLUENCE OF THE APOCALYPSE GENRE ON MATTHEW'S
PORTRAYAL OF PETER

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THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

2012

	<i>Abstract</i>	1
	<i>Signed Declaration</i>	2
	<i>Preface</i>	3
CHAPTER 1	Introduction:	4
	The Problem of Peter in Matthew	5
	Peter in Matthew as a Persisting Problem	17
	The Relevance of Apocalypses	21
	Statement of Purpose	23
	Overview	24
CHAPTER 2	Methodology:	26
	Introduction	26
	Clarification of Terminology	26
	The Apocalypse Genre	27
	Selection of Data	29
	Overview of Apocalypses	32
	Methodology	41
	Conclusion	50
CHAPTER 3	Exclusive Recipients of Revealed Mysteries:	51
	Introduction	51
	Daniel	53
	1 Enoch	56
	Jubilees	61
	Testament of Levi	63
	2 Enoch	64
	4 Ezra	66
	2 Baruch	73
	Apocalypse of Abraham	78
	Testament of Abraham	79
	3 Baruch	80
	Revelation	81
	Shepherd of Hermas	83
	Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah	87
	Apocalypse of Zephaniah	91
	Conclusions	91
CHAPTER 4	Humans Encountering the Divine Realm:	98
	Introduction	98
	Daniel	100
	1 Enoch	104
	Jubilees	107
	Testament of Levi	108
	2 Enoch	109
	4 Ezra	112

	2 Baruch	118
	Apocalypse of Abraham	121
	Testament of Abraham	123
	3 Baruch	125
	Revelation	128
	Shepherd of Hermas	131
	Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah	134
	Apocalypse of Zephaniah	135
	Conclusions	137
CHAPTER 5	Peter and the Disciples as Apocalyptic Seers in the Gospel of Mark:	143
	Introduction	143
	Jesus' Enigmatic Proclamation	144
	Jesus' Messianic Identity and Mode	169
	Conclusions	188
CHAPTER 6	Peter and the Disciples as Apocalyptic Seers in the Gospel of Matthew:	197
	Introduction	197
	Revelation of "These Things"	198
	Jesus' Enigmatic Proclamation	208
	Jesus' Messianic Identity and Mode	240
	Personal Eschatology	257
	Conclusions	263
CHAPTER 7	Peter's Significance for Matthew and His Readers:	273
	Summary of Research	273
	Peter in Matthew	282
	Conclusion	302
	<i>Works Cited</i>	304

Abstract

This study fills a gap in previous research concerning the portrayal of Peter in Matthew, especially the research of narrative-critical studies. Although narrative-critical studies generally recognize that Matthew has portrayed Peter and the disciples as recipients of revelation at points, they almost entirely neglect the apocalypses or apocalyptic literature more broadly as a potentially helpful background for this motif, nor does the motif itself figure significantly into their conclusions. Therefore, Part 1 of this study examines fourteen different Jewish and Christian apocalypses in order to determine generic aspects of how the apocalypses portray their seers, and to identify specific textual features that support these generic aspects of a seer's portrayal. These specific textual features then provide the guiding coordinates for Part 2, which assesses the influence of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers on the portrayal of Peter and the disciples in Matthew's Gospel and main source, Mark's Gospel. Like the apocalypses, both Evangelists deploy the features of exclusionary statements, narrative isolation, dissemination details, and emphasis of cognitive humanity and emotional-physical humanity to portray Peter and the disciples as the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, and as humans who encounter the mysteries of the divine realm. This leads to the conclusion that both Evangelists envisaged Peter and the disciples as apocalyptic seers in some sense. However, Matthew's redaction of Markan source material, incorporation of Q source material, and his own special material yield a more fully developed, or more explicit, portrayal of Peter and the disciples as apocalyptic seers than his Markan predecessor. The study concludes by focusing directly on Peter's significance for Matthew and his earliest audience. The research suggests that Peter's significance was, in part, as principal apocalyptic seer, which requires revision to the predominant scholarly conclusions about Peter in Matthew.

I hereby affirm that I have composed this thesis and that the work is my own.
The work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

John R. Markley

Preface

Translations of Scripture in the following study are generally my own, but sometimes follow the NRSV, and sometimes are slightly modified from the NRSV. Translations of the apocalypses are from “The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha,” edited by James H. Charlesworth. However, translations of *1 Enoch*, when different, follow those found in “1 Enoch 1,” by George W. E. Nickelsburg. For the *Shepherd of Hermas*, translations and versification follow “The Apostolic Fathers, 3rd ed.,” edited by Michael W. Holmes.

During my time in Edinburgh, I enjoyed the hospitality of Scotty and Rebecca Manor, Sean and Leah Turchin, and Jeremy and Katy Kidwell. I am very thankful for their willingness to open their homes to me and their willingness to share their lives with me. I am especially indebted to Scotty, whose encouragement and comradery kept me going at points.

I would like to thank my supervisors, Dr. Paul Foster and Prof. Larry Hurtado. Dr. Foster’s guidance was crucial to helping me out of the foggy first stages of this research. His insightful comments all along have made my work stronger, and his sense of humor was always refreshing. Prof. Hurtado’s comments on various methodological issues helped me to untangle my thoughts at points. Both supervisors repeatedly set aside time from their full schedules to graciously offer their guidance and advice.

She has waited patiently for our journey to finally arrive at this point, and now that we are here, I take delight in thanking my wife Anna for all that she is to me and all that she has done to support my work. She has spent many evenings, weekends, and entire months alone while I was away working on this thesis. Her encouragement has fueled my work from the beginning and helped it to its completion. Her own work has made this research possible. I love you Anna! I would also like to thank my parents, Robert and Janet Markley, whose love cultivated within me a desire to learn from Scripture and to pursue wisdom and understanding.

John R. Markley
May, 2012

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The present study endeavors to make a contribution to one of the most thoroughly covered subjects in the field of New Testament Studies: Peter in the Gospel of Matthew.¹ This study will approach the evidence from a different direction than has normally been taken—from the angle of Jewish and early-Christian apocalypticism. This approach arises from the conviction that the apocalypses, as a prime literary genre for expressions of apocalypticism and apocalyptic eschatology, were a substantial component of the literary milieu in which Matthew and his sources wrote. For this reason, it is valid to investigate the influence that the apocalypses might have had on Matthew's portrayal of Peter. When the evidence is approached from this angle, the portrait of Peter in the Gospel of Matthew is seen through somewhat different eyes than in previous studies, and so confronts its admirers with unfamiliar lucidity. In this way, the present study will provide a constructive critique

1. That Burgess could compile an 82 page *selective* bibliography on Matthew 16:17-19 alone—which could no doubt be greatly extended since its compilation—indicates both the high interest in the figure of Simon Peter and the centrality of this passage (and the Gospel of Matthew) for questions about him (J. Burgess, *A History of the Exegesis of Matthew 16:17–19 from 1781 to 1965* [Ann Arbor: Edwards Brothers, 1976]). Scholarly focus on this passage is justified on account of its significance since the Reformation, its uniqueness to Matthew, and the importance of the Gospel of Matthew in early Christianity. On the last point, Massaux says, “Of all the New Testament writings, the Gospel of MT. was the one whose literary influence was the most widespread and the most profound in the Christian literature that extended to the last decades of the second century...Until the end of the second century, the first gospel remained the gospel par excellence...the Gospel of Matthew was, therefore, the normative fact of Christian life. It created the background for ordinary Christianity” (Édouard Massaux, *The Apologists and the Didache* [ed. Arthur J. Bellinzoni; vol. 3 of *The Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew on Christian Literature Before Saint Irenaeus*; trans. Norman J. Belval and Suzanne Hecht; New Gospel Studies 5/3; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1993], 186–87). See also, Wolf-Dietrich Köhler, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums in der Zeit vor Irenäus* (WUNT 2.24; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987).

of the predominant conclusions of recent scholarship, which have not sufficiently accounted for the influence of the apocalypse genre on Matthew's portrayal of Peter. The thesis of this research is that the portrayal of Peter in the Gospel of Matthew has been shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers.

The Problem of Peter in Matthew

In 1979, Jack Kingsbury argued that the figure of Peter in Matthew's Gospel had become a theological problem.² He based this judgment on the fact that redaction critics had arrived at two divergent estimations of the Matthean Peter. One view, associated primarily with Reinhart Hummel, held that Matthew portrayed Peter as "supreme Rabbi," who functioned as guarantor of the claim that Matthew's community practiced halakah originating from Jesus himself:

Die Kirche als ganze ist Bewahrerin der Tradition und Inhaberin der Lehr- und Disziplinargewalt; darüber hinaus ist Petrus beides in besonderer und einmaliger Weise, als "supreme Rabbi." Dabei liegt auf dem Amt des Petrus das ungleich größere Gewicht. Denn er ist für Matthäus der Garant der in seinem Evangelium schriftlich fixierten Tradition, die damit bleibende Gültigkeit erhält.³

The other view, associated primarily with Georg Strecker, held that Matthew portrayed Peter as a "typical disciple," with the result that Peter is a type of the individual disciple in Matthew's community:

Die Gestalt des Petrus sprengt den Rahmen der historischen Einmaligkeit der Leben-Jesu-Situation; sie hat primär nicht historische, sondern typologische

2. Jack D. Kingsbury, "The Figure of Peter in Matthew's Gospel as a Theological Problem," *JBL* 98 (1979): 67–83.

3. Reinhart Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kirche und Judentum im Matthäusevangelium* (BEvT 33; München: Chr. Kaiser, 1963), 63, who was followed by G. Bornkamm, "The Authority to 'Bind' and 'Loose' in the Church in Matthew's Gospel," in *The Interpretation of Matthew* (ed. Graham Stanton; IRT 3; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970), 92–95. The *supreme rabbi* view is scarcely maintained in more recent scholarship. Notably, this is the position of W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, vol. 3 (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 647–52. Though they clarify that "Peter's prominence seems to be a function of ecclesiology" on account of his concentrated prominence in 13:53–17:27 (Ibid., 649), and that "there is a sense in which Peter's primacy reflects his rôle in salvation-history," which is analogous to that of Abraham (Ibid., 651). Jesper Svartvik, "Matthew and Mark," in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries* (ed. David C Sim and Boris Repschinski; LNTS 333; London: T&T Clark, 2008), 43–45, has more recently espoused the *supreme rabbi* view.

Bedeutung; in ihr konkretisiert sich das Christsein des einzelnen in der Gemeinde, für das demnach das Nebeneinander von “negativen” und “positiven” Elementen charakteristisch zu sein scheint.⁴

As Kingsbury saw it, these divergent views indicated a methodological flaw in redaction criticism, because both views had failed to fully integrate their reconstructed portraits of Peter with Matthew’s larger theological concerns—hence his identification of Peter in Matthew as a “theological problem.” Providing an initial attempt at such integration, Kingsbury concluded that the *supreme rabbi view* attributed too weighty a role to Peter, as uniquely distinct from the other disciples, and also ignored Jesus’ statements elsewhere that seemed to impinge upon this view;⁵ at the same time, he concluded that the *typical disciple view* neglected an apparent special focus on Peter in Matthew’s Gospel. He argued for a position somewhere between the two: Peter was indeed portrayed as a typical disciple, yet he was also portrayed as having unique salvation-historical primacy. The significance of this for Matthew’s community is captured when Kingsbury says,

For them [i.e., Matthew’s church], Peter is of course a man of the past. His place is with the earthly disciples of Jesus, whose ministry, like that of John and Jesus, was to Israel...He was the “first” one called by Jesus to be his disciple, and hence enjoyed a primacy among the Twelve that is salvation-historical in character. As such, he was the “spokesman” of the disciples and can be regarded as “typical,” positively and negatively, both of them and of subsequent followers of Jesus.⁶

Kingsbury states that the typical aspect of Peter’s portrayal had an exemplary function for Matthew’s church:

Since it is common knowledge that the disciples in the first gospel are representative of the members of Matthew’s church, we recognize that Strecker is correct in asserting that the figure of Peter in Matthew’s gospel

4. Georg Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchung zur Theologie des Matthäus* (3rd edition; FRLANT 82; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 205.

5. However, Hummel does acknowledge that Peter can be conceived of as “supreme Rabbi” only in view of the qualifications of 23:8-12: “Das gilt freilich nur mit der in 23:8-12 genannten Einschränkung” (Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung*, 63). Further, Hummel seems to recognize a degree of typicality in Matthew’s portrayal of Peter: “Wie bei Markus und Lukas ist er der Repräsentant und Sprecher der Zwölf” (Ibid., 59).

6. Kingsbury, “Figure of Peter,” 80.

provides the Christians of Matthew's church with an example of what it means, either positively or negatively, to be a follower of Jesus.⁷

In Kingsbury's judgment, then, Matthew's church viewed Peter as a positive and negative example of discipleship, but also as unique in that he retained a position of salvation-historical primacy, being the first to follow Jesus, thus representing their tradition-historical link to him.⁸

Kingsbury's appeal for greater theological synthesis marked a transition in studies of the Matthean Peter from redaction- to narrative-critical methodology.⁹ This transition, however, has not left the essential questions posed by redaction criticism behind.¹⁰ For example, reacting to the biographical approach of historical-criticism,¹¹ redaction critics recognized that the Evangelists had their own perceptions and understanding of Peter.¹² Their analyses of Matthew's *Tendenzen* entailed other

7. Ibid., 72.

8. Kingsbury's middle-ground position was already anticipated in some ways by Kähler, who maintains a tension between the unique and typical aspects of Peter's portrayal: "Die kurze Analyse...erweisen, daß sich die typologische und die heilsgeschichtliche Stellung des Petrus in der Sicht des Matth. nicht gegeneinander ausspielen lassen. Der Protapostolos ist sicher einerseits Repräsentant der Jünger und damit auch Urbild des 'wider-spruchsvollen Seins des Christen', aber seine heilsgeschichtliche Funktion als Garant der treuen Überlieferung der Offenbarung darf deswegen nicht heruntergespielt werden" (Christoph Kähler, "Zur Form- und Traditions-geschichte von Matth. xvi. 17–19," *NTS* 23 [1976/77]: 56). Note, however, Kingsbury's many points of contention with Kähler's thesis (Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 75 n. 26).

9. The transition towards greater synthesis and integration of the portrait of Peter with the whole literary work was already evident, however, in Raymond E. Brown, Karl P. Donfried, and John Reumann, eds., *Peter in the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1973).

10. Cf. Petri Merenlahti and Raimo Hakola, "Reconceiving Narrative Criticism," in *Characterization in the Gospels: Reconceiving Narrative Criticism* (ed. David Rhoads and Kari Syreeni; JSNTSup 184; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 22–23.

11. E.g., O. Cullmann, *Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr* (Floyd V. Filson; London: SCM, 1953). Following Cullmann, other noteworthy historical investigations have been: Brown, Donfried, and Reumann, *Peter in the New Testament*; Rudolf Pesch, *Simon Petrus. Geschichte und geschichtliche Bedeutung des ersten Jüngers Jesu Christi* (Päpste und Papsttum Bd. 15; Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1980); Carsten P. Thiede, *Simon Peter From Galilee to Rome* (Academie Books, 1986); Pheme Perkins, *Peter: Apostle for the Whole Church* (SPNT; Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1994); J. P. Meier, *Companions and Competitors* (A Marginal Jew 3; New York: Doubleday, 2001), 221–45; James D. G. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem* (Christianity in the Making 2; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 1058–76; Martin Hengel, *Saint Peter: The Underestimated Apostle* (Der unterschätzte Petrus. Zwei Studien; trans. Thomas H. Trapp; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010); Markus Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter* (WUNT 262; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

12. On the relationship of redaction criticism to historical questions pertaining to Peter, see Brown, Donfried, and Reumann, *Peter in the New Testament*, 8–11.

questions about what significance or function this portrayal was meant to have for Matthew's church or community. Narrative studies of Peter in Matthew have likewise continued to address these questions, but have based their answers to them, following Kingsbury's lead, on a more holistic reading of Peter within the entire literary-theological work.¹³

Furthermore, narrative studies have followed Kingsbury's lead not only in their aims for integration and synthesis of Peter's portrait with the Gospel as a whole, but they have also generally concurred with his middle-ground conclusions—what will be referred to as the *modified typical disciple view*. The *modified typical disciple view*, which recognizes the tension between Peter's uniqueness, on the one hand, and his typicality (and exemplary function), on the other, has indeed achieved something of a consensus.¹⁴ The consensus can be traced through the respective works of Michael J. Wilkins, Pheme Perkins, Kari Syreeni, and Timothy Wiarda.¹⁵

Michael J. Wilkins

Wilkins' work, *The Concept of Disciple in Matthew's Gospel*, includes a substantial chapter specifically focused on Matthew's theological understanding of Peter.¹⁶ He affirms Kingsbury's conclusion that Peter's uniqueness for Matthew and Matthew's church is found in his place of salvation-historical primacy:

13. Redaction criticism has remained a useful tool for many narrative studies of Peter in Matthew. E.g., Perkins, *Peter*, 52–80; Kari Syreeni, "Peter as a Character and Symbol in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Characterization in the Gospels: Reconceiving Narrative Criticism* (ed. David Rhoads and Kari Syreeni; JSNTSup 184; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 108.

14. Though within this general consensus view variation is present. For example, not all emphasize Peter's salvation-historical primacy. The label, *modified typical disciple view*, is being employed only as a heuristic term; this is not the name of a position that scholars have given themselves or ascribed to. It is the name being used to identify scholars who, following Kingsbury's article, maintain a tension between the unique and typical aspects of Peter's portrayal, and who see his function to be largely typical and exemplary for the experience of discipleship.

15. Michael J. Wilkins, *The Concept of Disciple in Matthew's Gospel: As Reflected in the Use of the Term μαθητής* (NovTSup 59; Leiden: Brill, 1988); Perkins, *Peter*; Syreeni, "Character and Symbol"; Timothy Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels: Pattern, Personality, and Relationship* (WUNT 2.127; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000). Kingsbury reaffirmed his conclusions in Jack D. Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (2 ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 129–45.

16. Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 173–216.

Peter is advanced as a salvation-historical model. He is the first disciple called (4:18), the first among the disciple/apostles (10:2), and the first member of the church (16:17-19). He is the first to go through Jesus as the bridge from Israel to the church. He is, therefore, personally prominent as a link between the OT promises of the messianic kingdom and salvation, and their fulfillment in the New Testament. Peter is an illustrative Jewish individual who has made the salvation-historical transition from Israel to the church.¹⁷

Although Wilkins is primarily affirming Peter's uniqueness in the above quotation, his use of the phrase "salvation-historical *model*," and his statement that "Peter is an *illustrative* Jewish individual," perhaps indicate how closely he relates Peter's uniqueness and typicality.¹⁸ Elsewhere, Wilkins more forcefully asserts the typical aspect of Peter's portrait in Matthew, arguing that Peter provides an individualized portrayal of what is true of the other disciples:

Jesus creates a new community where all disciples are brothers, and Jesus alone is their teacher and Master. This is why the strengths and weaknesses of Peter are portrayed. Just like all the other disciples, Peter has strengths and weaknesses and is instructed by Jesus so that he can progress and understand Jesus' mission.¹⁹

Wilkins concludes that the typical aspect of Peter's portrait has an exemplary function for Matthew's church:

Peter also functions exemplarily in much the same way as do the group of disciples. In his strengths and in his weaknesses he can be an example to Matthew's church. This is why Matthew has accentuated the truly human element in Peter. The church would find much in common with Peter's typically human characteristics, and he would be the named example from among the disciples. He is much like any common believer with his highs and lows, and therefore, becomes an example from whom the church can learn.²⁰

Wilkins, therefore, aligns himself very closely with Kingsbury in his conclusions.

Pheme Perkins

Perkins' comprehensive study, *Peter: Apostle for the Whole Church*, includes a redaction- and narrative-critical analysis of Peter in Matthew. She understands

17. Ibid., 212.

18. Italics added

19. Ibid., 215.

20. Ibid.

Peter's uniqueness to be found in his place as "first" and in his function as guarantor of Jesus' teaching:

Peter is the primary figure whose understanding guarantees that the teaching preserved in the church represents what the Lord has commanded...Matthew designates him "first" in the list of Jesus' disciples (Matt. 10:2). He is the first to be called (Matt. 4:18)[citing Kingsbury]. His name "Peter" is associated with the solid foundation for the Kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus.²¹

Perkins also underscores the typical aspect of Peter's portrait:

Despite the exalted role which Peter fills as spokesperson for the disciples and authoritative interpreter of the traditions handed down from Jesus, Matthew never separates him completely from the larger group of disciples. His persistent need for correction and instruction draws the reader's attention to his weaknesses as well as his strengths.²²

Although her emphasis on Peter's function as guarantor of Jesus' teaching may seem to support the *supreme rabbi view*, she explicitly rejects that view; rather, she holds that "Peter is the basis for the tradition of Christian practice in the Matthean community," emphasizing that halakah is founded upon him, not doctrine.²³

Perkins concludes that Matthew's portrayal of Peter is "complex and ambiguous," and that Peter in Matthew, as also in Mark, "always exemplifies what it means to be a follower of Jesus."²⁴ Therefore, Perkins' emphasis of both the unique and typical aspects of Peter's portrait in Matthew²⁵—seeing the typical aspect to have an exemplary function—places her firmly within the *modified typical disciple view*. Like Kingsbury and Wilkins, she sees Peter's uniqueness as having a tradition-historical significance for Matthew's community (based on his salvation-historical place as "first"). She distinguishes herself from them, however, with her emphasis on the tradition-historical significance of Peter's authority in matters of halakah.

21. Perkins, *Peter*, 66. She also thinks that Matthew's inclusion of his special material "has reinforced the positive picture of Peter suggested by his place as 'first' (Matt. 10:2) among the disciples" (Ibid., 71).

22. Ibid., 72. She further clarifies, "Peter's relationship to Jesus does not elevate him above the other disciples. Nor does it provide the basis for a hierarchical communal structure based on teachers and disciples" (Ibid., 73).

23. Ibid., 71.

24. Ibid., 72.

25. Cf. esp. Ibid., 71.

Kari Syreeni

Syreeni's essay, *Peter as a Character and Symbol in the Gospel of Matthew*, is a detailed narrative-critical study²⁶ that distinguishes three levels on which the characterization of Peter in Matthew's Gospel should be analyzed: aesthetic, ideological, and representational. Analysis of the aesthetic level is concerned with the narrative world wherein Peter is a character in the cohesive story of Matthew's Gospel, giving attention to the *intratextual* elements of his portrayal such as characterization, temporal sequences, and plot development.²⁷ Additionally, Syreeni maintains that attention must also be devoted to the *intertextual* connections between Peter's portrayal in Matthew's narrative world, and in that of Matthew's predecessor, Mark's Gospel.²⁸ In this way, Peter has meaning not only as a character in Matthew's Gospel, but as a Gospel character in relation to the Markan story.²⁹ The ideological level of analysis is concerned with the symbolic world wherein Peter is "a symbol for ethical values, doctrinal options, social and religious commitments, party strifes, or the like" in authorial, traditional, or readerly ideology.³⁰ The representational level of analysis is concerned with the "concrete world of everyday reality" wherein Peter was "a historical person, whose contribution to the Matthean character is indirect but vital; he is the *sine qua non* of all subsequent historical developments."³¹

As a character in the narrative world of Matthew's Gospel, Peter's uniqueness is found in his place as the first of Jesus' disciples, and in his role as spokesman, which "only highlights his prominence as the first and closest disciple of Jesus."³²

26. While Syreeni's primary methodology is narrative criticism, he employs other methods so as to assist in answering the questions posed by narrative criticism. Syreeni, "Character and Symbol," 108 n. 8.

27. *Ibid.*, 113.

28. *Ibid.*, 113–14.

29. *Ibid.*, 115.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*, 149.

This then becomes the basis for Peter's uniqueness in the symbolic world of the Gospel:

As a symbol, Matthew's Peter embodies both positive and negative values. The positive symbolism is mostly attached to the narrative notion of Peter as Jesus' first and closest disciple. The transfiguration scene is an instructive point of departure in assessing these brighter sides of Peter's symbolic value. As eyewitness and hearer of the heavenly voice, as guarantor of salvation-historical continuity, and as the historical seal of the trustworthiness of the Christian proclamation, Matthew's Peter is an unwavering uniting, pan-Christian symbol, much as he is in 2 Peter (cf. 2 Pet. 1.16-21). Also, his christological confession remains valid for all time. This aspect of Peter the symbol coheres with the 'historicized' Peter the character whose status as the first disciple was fully appreciated by the narrator. Yet there is much more to Peter's positive symbol than his historicity. Not a mere historical person, Peter is a revelation-historical symbol with abiding theological value.³³

At the end of the above excerpt, Syreeni says in a footnote that "[o]ne might indeed speak of Peter's 'salvation-historical primacy' in Matthew, as does J. D.

Kingsbury."³⁴

Syreeni also discerns typicality in the portrayal of Peter in both the narrative world and the symbolic world:

More ambiguously, but with unmistakably positive connotations, the Matthean Peter illustrates the brighter as well as the darker sides of Christians of all times. The 'first' disciple is the archetypal Christian in his eagerness to follow Christ and in his weakness, his little faith, and his defective understanding of God's ways. These are the facets of Peter that Christian interpreters best recognize. Understandably so, for such paradigmatic traits can be deduced rather simply from the narrative. Here aesthetic and ideological aspects converge.³⁵

However, Syreeni, following Nau,³⁶ detects a subtle polemic directed towards Peter

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., 149–50 n. 80.

35. Ibid., 150.

36. Nau's redaction-critical study argues that Matthew attempts to neutralize an exalted view of Peter held among the Antiochene Christians by placing him among the other disciples (Arlo J. Nau, *Peter in Matthew: Discipleship, Diplomacy, and Dispraise—with an Assessment of Power and Privilege in the Petrine Office* [GNS 36.; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992], esp. 36–37). Smith, on the other hand, in his study of the polemical utilization of the Peter figure in early Christian controversies, notes that Matthew exhibits a pro-Petrine stance, but does not discern polemical reasons underlying this, nor does he sense any polemical undertones against the figure of Peter (T. V. Smith, *Petrine Controversies in Early Christianity. Attitudes Towards Peter in Christian Writings of the First Two Centuries* [WUNT 15; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1985], 156–60).

at points where the symbolic world no longer corresponds to the narrative world:

There [i.e., in the places where the symbolic world lacks any counterpart in the narrative world], the ‘first’ disciple’s historical and theological primacy, which Matthew seemingly took for granted and aptly exploited for a general paradigm, ceases to pass unquestioned. Peter is only in part an all-Christian symbol. He also embodies the traditions and values of a Jewish-Christian group in Matthew’s community...The narrator suggests to the reader that not all of what was said of Peter concerning his leadership and authority should be taken at face value.³⁷

According to Syreeni, the Jewish-Christians in Matthew’s community, whom Peter symbolizes, were apparently threatening to withdraw from the community over disputes with Gentile newcomers. Matthew, therefore, admonishes the Petrine front (Jewish-Christians) to forgive a sinful brother (Gentile-Christians). Moreover, “Peter’s lack of understanding in halachic and disciplinary matters suggests that the author indirectly questions the Jewish-Christian understanding and application of the law. Matthew also warns that the ‘first’ may become the last and the ‘last’—the Gentile newcomers—may become first.”³⁸ The purpose of this subtle polemic directed towards Peter, then, is to rein in the presumed authority of the Jewish-Christian group, and maintain the unity between the Jewish and Gentile segments of the community. The typical aspect of Peter’s symbolic value is thus twofold in Syreeni’s estimation: on the one hand, Peter is typical for all Christians, but on the other hand, he is typical for a Jewish-Christian group in Matthew’s community.

Although Syreeni diverges from Kingsbury, Wilkins, and Perkins in that he perceives a polemic directed towards Peter at points, he nevertheless affirms their general conclusions. Like the others, Syreeni argues that Matthew indeed portrays Peter as having a unique place of salvation-historical primacy, but that Peter also illustrates typical characteristics of all Christians at many points in the Gospel. Much of Peter’s typicality—his eagerness to follow Jesus, weakness, little faith, and

37. Syreeni, “Character and Symbol,” 150.

38. *Ibid.*, 151.

incorrect understanding—provides a “pan-Christian paradigm for discipleship,”³⁹ and so has an exemplary function. Despite Syreeni’s questionable division of the typical aspect of Peter’s portrayal, he nevertheless holds the unique and typical elements in tension, which is the primary characteristic of the *modified typical disciple view*.

Timothy Wiarda

Wiarda’s work, *Peter in the Gospels: Pattern, Personality and Relationship*, examines a pattern of *positive intentions followed by reversed expectations* in the combination of positive and negative features in Peter’s portrait. Wiarda describes the pattern as follows: “Peter is portrayed as saying or doing something in relation to Jesus based on a certain understanding of what is appropriate or with a certain expectation of what will result, only to receive correction or be proven wrong.”⁴⁰ This pattern brings focus to Jesus, frequently occasioning his teaching, and often has an illustrative or exemplary function, modelling discipleship at the life-related level of the narrative (i.e., the level of Matthew’s audience).⁴¹

Wiarda’s evaluation of the typical aspect of Peter’s portrait is considerably different than that of Kingsbury, Wilkins, Perkins, or Syreeni. He draws more of a distinction between Peter and the disciples, which has the affect of minimizing the typical aspect of Peter’s portrait at the story-related level of the narrative, and accentuating Peter’s unique characterization.⁴² For instance, he holds that “only in

39. Ibid., 152.

40. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 34.

41. Wiarda makes a helpful distinction between the story-related level of the narrative and the life-related level. Peter’s function at the story-related level refers to how he, as a character, advances the plot towards its conclusion, and also how he relates to the other characters in the narrative. Peter’s function at the life-related level refers to his significance for Matthew’s audience (analogous to rhetorical significance). For a full discussion, see Ibid., 145–49.

42. Wiarda sees the following as distinctive aspects of Peter’s characterization: “outspokenness/boldness of expression,” “quick initiative,” “overfunctioning,” “being an opinion leader,” “concern for Jesus,” “desire to honour and serve Jesus,” “determination to be loyal to Jesus,” “a distinctive sense of self-confidence in his discipleship,” “a measure of courage,” “grief at awareness of disloyalty” (Ibid., 90–91), “incautious readiness to venture an opinion,” “distinctive enthusiasm for Jesus,” “faith-inspiring daring,” and “confidence in his alignment with Jesus’ standards” (Ibid., 98–99).

15:15 and 19:27 can [Peter] be safely described as a spokesman for the others,”⁴³ but he does concede that Peter’s frequent misunderstanding is a typical trait exhibited by the disciples generally.⁴⁴

His reticence towards the typical aspect of the Matthean Peter is closely related to his conclusions that Peter is not, in fact, primarily typical of the disciples in Mark’s Gospel, as the consensus states.⁴⁵ But it should be noted that while making this argument with reference to the Markan Peter, Wiarda still upholds the view that Peter serves a typical or exemplary function at the life-related level of Mark’s narrative:

While I have argued that Peter is not primarily a type of the Twelve, this does not mean that his portrait lacks strong relevance for readers facing issues typical to disciples...As an individualized figure the Markan Peter serves to exemplify the personal dynamics of discipleship. Peter’s experience with Jesus as this is portrayed in Mark involves emotions, thoughts, learning, deliverances, fears, devotion, tension, growing self-awareness, and more. Such aspects of the disciple-Jesus relationship are more effectively modelled by an individual than a group, and by a realistic rather than a stylized character.⁴⁶

Wiarda therefore views the Markan Peter as mostly unique (or individualized) at the story-related level of the narrative, but as typical, serving an exemplary function, at the life-related level. Although he does ascribe more typical aspects to the characterization of the Matthean Peter than the Markan Peter, his conclusions remain essentially the same: “Is Peter then a typical disciple? Through much of the Gospel’s [i.e., Matthew’s] narrative he does serve to illustrate aspects of Christian

43. Ibid., 167. It is important to note that in the context of this quotation, Wiarda is discussing Peter’s role as spokesman for the disciples in the sense that what he says, he says in behalf of all the disciples. So in this sense, Peter’s role as spokesman would be classified as typical. However, Peter’s role as spokesman can be viewed as a unique element of his portrayal in the sense that he alone uniquely functions as such. Thus, the other scholars in the modified “typical disciple” position seem to view his spokesman role as an effect of his unique place as ‘first’.

44. Ibid., 42–43 cf. 99.

45. Wiarda is followed by Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 165–80.

46. Timothy Wiarda, “Peter as Peter in the Gospel of Mark,” *NTS* 45 (1999): 35–36.

experience...He does so, however, as a character who stands out from the disciple group and in part reflects distinctive traits.”⁴⁷

Wiarda is somewhat distinct in both his approach and conclusions concerning the portrayal of Peter in Matthew.⁴⁸ He perceives a difference between the degree to which Peter is typical for discipleship at the life-related level of the narrative, and the degree to which he is typical for the disciples at the story-related level of the narrative, which is not entirely convincing. Despite this, he still espouses a *modified typical disciple view* since he maintains a tension between the unique and typical aspects of Peter’s portrait, understanding the typical aspects to have an exemplary function. Indeed, Wiarda affirms both Matthew’s escalated emphasis on the prominence and role of Peter, on the one hand, and his typical trait of misunderstanding, on the other:

It may be observed that, compared to Mark, Matthew does place a heightened emphasis on Peter’s prominence and role. This is seen especially in 16:17-19, but also in the reference to Peter as ‘first’ in the listing of the twelve (10:2), and the promise concerning the disciples’ shared role of judging the tribes of Israel (19:28). Though there is a tendency among interpreters to discern Peter’s predicted role as church leader and teacher already operative within several Matthean episodes, notably 14:28-31; 15:15; 17:24-27 and 18:21-22, his typical disciple trait of misunderstanding speaks against this. Nowhere in Matthew (apart from 16:17-19) is Peter characterized as an ideal student of Jesus. The details and narrative shaping in these episodes move in quite a different direction. In each case Peter is found wanting and has to be corrected or rebuked. The reader is thus shown the painful process of discipleship, not assured concerning a trustworthy recipient of tradition.⁴⁹

Wiarda’s affirmation of both the unique and typical aspects of Peter’s characterization, along with the exemplary function of the typical aspect, aligns him with the other scholars holding the *modified typical disciple view*. In contrast with Kingsbury, Perkins, and Syreeni, however, Wiarda does not discern in the Matthean Peter any unique status as guarantor of the community’s tradition or teaching.

47. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 167.

48. Wiarda’s use of narrative criticism is distinct in that he focuses primarily on the episodal level of the story’s individual units.

49. *Ibid.*, 99.

Peter in Matthew as a Persisting Problem

Kingsbury proposed what has been termed a *modified typical disciple view* as a solution to the theological problem created by redaction criticism's divergent estimations of the Matthean Peter. The above review of literature has demonstrated that this view, as a middle-ground position, has achieved something of a consensus in the important works of Wilkins, Perkins, Syreeni, and Wiarda. These works all recognize three things: 1) Peter has a unique and prominent role in Matthew's Gospel; 2) Peter's uniqueness must be held in tension with the typical aspects of his portrayal; 3) The typical aspects of his portrayal—that is, his strengths and weakness, successes and failures—function to exemplify discipleship, in all of its ambivalence, for Matthew's audience.⁵⁰ It would appear, then, that the *modified typical disciple view*, in its pluriformity, has effectively mitigated the theological problem to which Kingsbury originally directed it.

But another problem has been created in the establishment of the *modified typical disciple view*. This problem is found in the widespread neglect of the apocalypses as an informing background for understanding the Matthean portrait of Peter.⁵¹ The problem is theological insofar as it handicaps any assessment of the

50. The *modified typical disciple view* is also held by Luz: "On the one hand, he [i.e., Peter] is in different ways a model of every disciple or of the disciples as a whole. On the other hand, he is a unique historical figure and plays a singular role" (Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8–20* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001], 366). Luz continues, "Peter is important precisely here [i.e., 16:17–19] where the church originates from Israel. Thus it is not enough to speak of Peter as '*Rabbi supremus*', for in the Matthean story Peter is obviously a singular and unique figure. However, it also is not enough to speak of a 'salvation-history' priority of Peter, for his uniqueness is precisely that the 'unique' Peter has a typical *function* in the present" (Ibid., 367, italics original; cf. Ulrich Luz, "The Disciples in the Gospel According to Matthew," in *The Interpretation of Matthew* [IRT 3; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983], 105, where Luz places more stress on Peter's typicality, apart from his uniqueness). Burnett is another that affirms the *modified typical disciple view* (F. W. Burnett, "Characterization and Reader Construction of Characters in the Gospels," *Semeia* 63 [1992]: 20–23). Hengel emphasizes Peter's uniqueness, though he also draws attention to the exemplary function of his portrayal: "Instead of being a 'typical' disciple, one ought rather to speak of Peter as a unique example, which—in the dual sense of what is positive and what is negative—elevates him far above the other disciples" (Hengel, *Saint Peter*, 25 n. 76).

51. This is also a problem in studies of the disciples. E.g., Luz, "The Disciples in the Gospel According to Matthew," 98–128; Jeannine K. Brown, *The Disciples in Narrative Perspective: The Portrayal and Function of the Matthean Disciples* (SBLABib 9; Atlanta: Society

theological significance that the portrait of Peter had for Matthew and his audience, and how this portrait connected with Matthew's larger theological concerns; the problem is historical insofar as it entirely disconnects the Matthean Peter (and so Matthew and his audience) from one of the salient strands of first-century Judaism—one to which Matthew apparently connected with strongly in the formulation of at least his eschatology.⁵² This problem is an especially surprising one given the ample acknowledgement that Matthew alone depicts Jesus as attributing Peter's confession of Jesus' identity to revelation from the Father (Matt 16:17).⁵³ Noting this fact, however, has not usually provoked more than passing comment about the background for this concept (i.e., revelation) in the apocalypses or apocalypticism more generally. Perhaps the neglect of the apocalypses as an informing background for studies of Peter in Matthew is a lingering effect of what Klaus Koch identified as the general "mistrust and discomfort" with which New Testament scholarship viewed 'apocalyptic' from 1920 to 1960.⁵⁴

of Biblical Literature, 2002).

52. David C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew* (SNTSMS 88; Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 175–77, 248–49.

53. Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 69, 75; Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 187–89; Perkins, *Peter*, 68; Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 97.

54. Koch says that the voices of scholars in this period who did consider the connection between apocalyptic and the New Testament "are lost in the great chorus of New Testament scholars who view apocalyptic of every kind with mistrust and discomfort, even when it appears in Christian guise, within the canon, in the book of Revelation" (Klaus Koch, *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic* [Ratlos vor der Apokalyptik; trans. Margaret Kohl; SBT 2.22; Naperville, Ill.: Alec R. Allenson Inc., 1970], 63). He continues, "This mood among New Testament scholars between 1920 and 1960 cannot be explained as being due to particular research results. For there was little, all too little, research into the history of New Testament times in those years, let alone into the apocalyptic texts" (Ibid., 63–64). Likewise, Collins says, "Theologians of a more rational bent are often reluctant to admit that such material [i.e., apocalyptic] played a formative role in early Christianity. There is consequently a prejudice against the apocalyptic literature which is deeply ingrained in biblical scholarship" (John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* [2 ed.; The Biblical Resource Series; Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1998], 1). However, as a notable exception to the general neglect of 'apocalyptic' in New Testament Studies, Käsemann famously argued that "[a]pocalyptic was the mother of Christian theology," basing this claim primarily on an analysis of certain passages in Matthew's Gospel that reflected the 'apocalyptic' outlook of the post-Easter "enthusiastic" Christians (Ernst Käsemann, "The Beginnings of Christian Theology," in *New Testament Questions of Today* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969], 102). Yet, even while making this argument, Käsemann does not provide any close analysis of apocalypses or apocalyptic texts (apart from a few references to the book of Revelation) to support his claims,

Kingsbury's only reference to apocalypticism as a potentially helpful background for understanding Matthew's portrait of Peter comes in a footnote where he refutes Kähler's suggestions that *4 Ezra* 10:57 and *Jos. Asen.* 16:14 provide analogies to Jesus' blessing of Peter in 16:17-19.⁵⁵ While acknowledging that Peter is here depicted as receiving divine revelation, Kingsbury rejects these possible analogies on formal grounds that they are visions, and 16:17-19 is narrative.⁵⁶ Wilkins also leaves the apocalypses unconsidered in his study of Peter in Matthew. This is due to the fact that he examines Peter from within the parameters of the concept of discipleship, which he constructs primarily through lexical-semantic analysis. Therefore, since apocalypses (either Daniel or those found in the Pseudepigrapha) contain no occurrence of the lexeme μαθητής, they do not have any bearing on Wilkins' evaluation of Peter's portrait.⁵⁷ Perkins mentions in a paragraph that certain episodes assert that Peter and the disciples are recipients of divine revelation (16:17-19; 10:26-27; 11:25; 13:16-17),⁵⁸ but she does not connect this motif with the apocalypses, nor does this motif have much bearing on her conclusions. Syreeni does not even mention Peter's reception of revelation in his discussion of Peter's confession,⁵⁹ and he never refers to apocalypses or

and his use of the term 'apocalyptic' is not very clear. Over time, scholarly interest in 'apocalyptic' has indeed surged to the point that, with regard to Paul, Matlock says, "'Apocalyptic' interpretation of Paul is, if not a consensus, then certainly a commonplace" (R. Barry Matlock, *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul: Paul's Interpreters and the Rhetorical Criticism* [JSNTSup 127; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996], 11). But as Matlock demonstrates, this "apocalyptic renaissance," as he calls it, has largely occurred without much meaningful connection between the abstraction 'apocalyptic' and the apocalypses (Ibid., esp. 247-316).

55. Kähler argues that the blessing of Peter in 16:17-19 represents "das Schema der Investitur des Offenbarungstradenten" (Kähler, "Zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte von Matth. xvi. 17-19," 44, 55-56).

56. Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 75 n. 26. In a later work, Kingsbury, while making the point that Matt 11:2-16:20 depicts the disciples as recipients of revelation, makes no reference to the apocalypses or apocalyptic literature (Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 136-39). Carter, observing the same, is also silent regarding the link between this motif and the apocalypses (W. Carter, *Matthew: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1996], 219-21).

57. Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 97.

58. Perkins, *Peter*, 68.

59. Syreeni, "Character and Symbol," 129-33. Syreeni's only association of Peter with revelation is in a statement that he does not elaborate on: "Not a mere historical person, Peter is a

apocalypticism more generally. Wiarda searches the Old Testament, Greco-Roman and rabbinic literature when examining backgrounds for the *reversed-expectations complex* associated with Peter (notably, he finds no likely background in these), yet he never examines the apocalypses or apocalyptic texts of Second Temple Judaism. He excludes them *a priori* on grounds that the Gospels are narrative, and apocalyptic texts are not.⁶⁰

Although these studies have many strengths, it is surprising that they have all failed to consider important evidence that may qualify how they sift the data concerning Peter, as well as their conclusions. For example, all of these studies acknowledge positive (or favorable) and negative (or unfavorable) features of Peter's portrait in Matthew.⁶¹ Features such as Peter's (and James and John's) fear at the transfiguration (17:6) and his requests to Jesus for explanation elsewhere (e.g., 15:15) are frequently classified as negative elements in the portrayal of Peter.⁶² But when the apocalypses are consulted, one observes that these are standard elements in the portrayal of apocalyptic seers, who were invariably portrayed positively.⁶³ Similarly, while Peter's imperception is adjudged to be a negative aspect of his portrait, perception difficulty can also be found as a standard characteristic of apocalyptic seers (e.g., Dan 12:8). Though minor exegetical points such as these may not seem important, they indeed have great bearing on conclusions concerning the significance that Peter had for Matthew and his audience. Apart from a study of the

revelation-historical symbol with abiding theological value" (Ibid., 149).

60. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 183–205. Excluding apocalyptic texts based on grounds that they are not narrative fails to recognize that each apocalypse comprises many literary forms, often organized by a narrative framework (cf. John J. Collins, "Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre," *Semeia* 14 [1979]: 9). Arguably, the same can be said about the gospel genre, to a certain degree.

61. Cf. Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 69–70; Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 240; Nau, *Peter*, 25.

62. E.g., the fear exhibited in 17:6 leads Wiarda to classify this as an episode "exhibiting behaviour improper to disciples" (Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 54). Wilkins classifies Peter's request for an explanation to the parable in 15:15 as "slightly negative" (Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 240).

63. Cf. *1 En.* 14:13–14 (fear); 18:14 (request for explanation).

influence of the apocalypses on Matthew's portrayal of Peter, the significance of Peter in early Christianity cannot be accurately understood.

The Relevance of Apocalypses

It is perhaps necessary at this point to present some reasons why the apocalypses should indeed be considered as a potentially helpful background for understanding Matthew's portrayal of Peter (perhaps scholars have rightly neglected them as irrelevant?).

First, as mentioned above, exegetes have long noted that Matt 16:17-19 attributes divine revelation to Peter. That this is the most programmatic passage in Matthew concerning Peter⁶⁴ warrants an investigation of the extent to which the motif of *Peter as a recipient of revelation* appears elsewhere in Matthew.⁶⁵ In order to responsibly interpret this motif, whatever its extent, it must be placed in some degree of continuity with the concept of revelation in antecedent Judaism.⁶⁶ The apocalypses are the starting point for doing so.

Second, the prevalence of the motif of *Peter as a recipient of revelation* in non-canonical Christian literature has likewise been frequently noted.⁶⁷ Commenting

64. Ibid., 198.

65. Others have noted, though in passing fashion and without any recourse to the apocalypses, that this motif extends beyond Peter's confession: Kingsbury thinks it extends from 11:2-16:20 (Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 136–39). He is followed by Carter (Carter, *Matthew*, 219–21). Perkins says that 16:17-19; 10:26-27; 11:25; and 13:16-17 portray Peter and the disciples as recipients of divine revelation (Perkins, *Peter*, 56). Wright has briefly commented that Jesus' teaching in parables portrays the disciples in the role of seers (N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* [Christian Origins and the Question of God 2; Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1997], 177–78).

66. Much work has already been done to address the continuity of Paul's concept of revelation with that of antecedent Judaism and the apocalypses. See, e.g., Markus Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity* (reprinted from J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) 1990; Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2009); Benjamin L. Gladd, *Revealing the Mysterion: The Use of Mystery in Daniel and Second Temple Judaism with Its Bearing on First Corinthians* (BZNW 160; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co., 2008).

67. See esp. Klaus Berger, "Unfehlbare Offenbarung: Petrus in der gnostischen und apokalyptischen Offenbarungsliteratur," in *Kontinuität und Einheit: Für Franz Mußner* (ed. Paul-Gerhard Müller and Werner Stenger; Freiburg/Basel/Wien: Herder, 1981), 261–326. See also, F. Lapham, *Peter: The Myth, the Man and the Writings: A Study of Early Petrine Text and Tradition* (JSNTSup 239; London; New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), esp. 237–53; Wolfgang A.

on the importance of Peter as a visionary in early Christianity, Berger says,

Daß auch die heidnische Umwelt des frühen Christentums Petrus als Visionär bezeugt, beweist, wie wichtig er in dieser Hinsicht für das Christentum war. So wird der Inhalt seiner Vision dem Evangelium gleichgestellt. Religionsgeschichtlich sehr aufschlußreich ist, wie vielfältige Formen und Typen aus dem Arsenal visionärer Schultradition sich mit der Figur des Petrus verbunden haben.⁶⁸

It is beyond the scope of this study to consider the trajectories of the motif in Christian tradition, but its very presence in later texts and tradition warrants a close investigation of it in the foundational Christian texts, such as Matthew's Gospel and source material. For example, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, which can be dated with a high degree of certainty to the Bar Kokhba revolt,⁶⁹ portrays Peter (and the disciples to a lesser degree) as an apocalyptic seer. This apocalypse reworks synoptic tradition, and demonstrates a literary use of Matthew's Gospel.⁷⁰ The portrayal of Peter as an apocalyptic seer in this apocalypse, and its literary use of Matthew's Gospel, underscore the importance of determining the degree to which Matthew himself, or his sources, had already been shaped by the earlier apocalypses of the Second Temple

Bienert, "The Picture of the Apostle in Early Christianity," in *Writings Related to the Apostles; Apocalypses and Related Subjects* (ed. Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher; vol. 2 of *New Testament Apocrypha*; trans. R. McL. Wilson; Louisville, Ken.: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 5–25. Somewhat differently than these, Nickelsburg notes the convergence between Enochic traditions and the figure of Peter in early Christianity (George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Enoch, Levi, and Peter: Recipients of Revelation in Upper Galilee," *JBL* 100 [1981]: 600; George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of Enoch Chapters 1–36; 81–108* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001], 103–4). Cullmann is typical of those who mention this as a trajectory in early Christianity, but see it as unrelated to Peter in Matthew (Cullmann, *Peter*, 62–63).

68. Berger, "Unfehlbare Offenbarung," 308.

69. Dennis D. Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter* (SBLDS 97; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988), 408–12; Richard Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (NovTSup 93; Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill, 1998), 176–94; C. Detlef G. Müller, "Apocalypse of Peter," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, rev. ed., vol. 2 (ed. Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher; trans. R. McL. Wilson; Louisville, Ken.: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 623–25.

70. Bauckham discerns a reference to Matt 5:10, a passage without synoptic parallel, in *Apoc. Pet.* 16:5, which leads him to conclude that Matthew's Gospel was "evidently the only written Gospel the author...used" (Bauckham, "Apocalypse of Peter," 173). For more evidence of the literary use of Matthew, cf. *Apoc. Pet.* 1:1–2 to Matt 24:3; 1:5 to Matt 24:5; 1:6 to Matt 24:30; 1:8 to Matt 16:27; 5:9 to Matt 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:12; 24:51; 25:30; cf. also Lapham, *Peter*, 197–99.

period. In other words, the portrayal of Peter as an apocalyptic seer in the later Christian revelatory literature suggests the value of a study such as this.

Lastly, on account of the likelihood that Matthew's portrayal of Jesus was influenced by the Danielic Son of Man—a figure that also appears in *1 Enoch* and *4 Ezra*—it is worth studying how Matthew has portrayed Peter and the disciples during their encounter with Jesus, the Son of Man.⁷¹ In other words, perhaps the portrayals of apocalyptic seers who beheld the Son of Man had shaped in some way Matthew's portrayal of Peter and the disciples' encounter with the Son of Man.

Statement of Purpose

The goal of the present study, then, is to fill this gap in the current state of research by examining the impact of apocalypses on Matthew's portrayal of Peter. The aim of this study is not to overturn the conclusions of the *modified typical disciple view* discussed above, despite the observation that the salient articulations of this view have created a theological and historical problem. Rather, the aim is to supplement, clarify, redirect, and perhaps extend particular aspects of this position. It will be argued that various pieces of data should be classified differently than they usually have been. Moreover, the investigation suggests that the uniqueness of the Matthean Peter is not necessarily found in his salvation-historical place as “first”

71. It is beyond question that Matthew was influenced by the book of Daniel, as his unique citation of the prophet attests (cf. Matt 24:15). Moreover, Moses argues that Matthew brackets the transfiguration pericope with four Son of Man verses (16:27; 16:28; 17:9; 17:12), thus forming a ‘Danielic Son of Man inclusio’ (A. D. A. Moses, *Matthew's Transfiguration Story and Jewish-Christian Controversy* [JSNTSup 122; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996], 89–99). See also Adela Yarbro Collins, “The Influence of Daniel on the New Testament,” in *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (by John J. Collins; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 96–99. Some scholars have also argued that Matthew knew of, or was influenced by, portions of *1 Enoch*. Dunn suggests that Matthew was influenced by the *Similitudes of Enoch* with reference to his concept of the Son of Man (James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* [Christianity in the Making 1; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 760–61). See also the case made by David C. Sim, “Matthew 22:13a and 1 Enoch 10:4a: A Case of Literary Dependence?” *JSNT* 47 (1992): 3–19. Still, David E. Orton, *The Understanding Scribe: Matthew and the Apocalyptic Ideal* (JSNTSup 25; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), 175, calls for research into the relationships between Matthew and apocalyptic literature more broadly.

(contra Kingsbury, Wilkins, Perkins, and Syreeni), nor in his function as guarantor of Jesus' *teaching* (contra Perkins and Syreeni), nor in the uniqueness of his personality (contra Wiarda). Finally, it will be argued that the typical aspects of his portrayal serve a wider range of functions than simply modelling or exemplifying discipleship.

The main claim of this research is that the portrayal of Peter in the Gospel of Matthew was shaped in part by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers. As will be clarified in the next chapter, this is not an argument for Matthew's direct literary dependency on specific apocalypses, though this may not have been unlikely if, as Orton cogently argues, Matthew was a scribe standing within the stream of apocalyptic tradition.⁷² Instead, it is an argument that there are common or generic aspects of the apocalypses' portrayals of their seers, and that the apocalypses were a significant component of the literary milieu in which Matthew and his sources wrote. Thus, Matthew drew upon his knowledge of the apocalypse genre in his portrayal of Peter.⁷³ As will be seen, this was an impulse that Matthew encountered in his source material.⁷⁴

Overview

This study divides into two parts. Part 1 addresses the methodology and procedure of this study. The primary focus of Part 1 is to reconstruct the broad contours of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers from a sampling of fourteen Jewish and Christian apocalypses. In light of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic

72. Ibid., esp. 165–74.

73. As a clarifying analogy, Paul's awareness of apocalypses that depict otherworldly journeys is evident in 2 Cor 12:2-4, though there is no evidence that he is literarily dependent on any one apocalypse at this point. This is not to suggest that 2 Cor 12:2-4 does not describe a real revelatory experience; rather, it recognizes that certain conventions found in the apocalypse genre shaped how Paul spoke of his experience (cf. 2 Cor 12:4 to 2 En. 19:6; 22:1b, 2a, 3 [J]; Rev 10:4).

74. This study assumes the "*Two Source*" Hypothesis, and so recognizes that Matthew's sources, Mark and Q, were indirect channels by which the apocalypse genre shaped his portrayal of Peter. For a recent introduction to the Two Source Hypothesis (or Two Document Hypothesis) and Q, see John S. Kloppenborg Verbin, *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), esp. 12–38.

seers established in Part 1, Part 2 then assesses the portrayal of Peter in Matthew's Gospel and source material.

Part 1 begins with chapter 2, which provides the rationale for the approach of this study, presents definitions and key terms, identifies the textbase used for reconstructing the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers, and navigates the methodological issues related to a study of this nature. Chapter 3 then discusses one aspect of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers: the apocalypses portray their seers as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries. Chapter 4 discusses a second aspect of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers: the apocalypses portray their seers as humans encountering the mysteries and beings of the divine realm.

Part 2 begins with chapter 5, which assesses the degree to which the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has shaped the portrayal of Peter in Matthew's main source, Mark's Gospel. Chapter 6 then assesses the degree to which the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has shaped Matthew's portrayal of Peter. Chapter 6 also determines the likely avenues of this influence—indirectly through Mark and Q, or directly through Matthean redaction and special material. Chapter 7 concludes the study with a proposal of Peter's historical and theological significance for Matthew and his community. This proposal is presented along with a critique of the *modified typical disciple view*.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

As a necessary first step in this study, we must clarify key terminology and delimit the primary data to be considered in chs. 3-4. Due to the nature of the data and the difficulties they present, this chapter discusses several methodological issues as well.

Clarification of Terminology

Scholars have not always meant the same thing when using the word ‘apocalyptic’. The word has been used as both an adjective and a noun, which has created confusion. When used as a noun, it has referred to at least three different things: 1) a type of literature, 2) a type of eschatology, and 3) a type of sociological movement.¹ Adding to the confusion, individual scholars have not always clearly distinguished which one of these three things is meant when referring to ‘apocalyptic’.² However, great strides towards clarity have been made by differentiating between an ‘apocalypse’ as a literary form or genre, ‘apocalyptic eschatology’ as a type of religious perspective, and ‘apocalypticism’ as a sociological

1. David E. Aune, “Understanding Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic,” in *Apocalypticism, Prophecy, and Magic in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 1.

2. E.g., in a paragraph where he has already said that “[a]pocalyptic was not a ‘popular’ literature...” it is difficult to discern whether Russell is still referring to the literary type or to the social movement when he concludes the same paragraph by saying, “[t]he evidence points rather to the fact that apocalyptic was a fairly strong current in the mainstream of Judaism....” (D. S. Russell, *The Method & Message of Jewish Apocalyptic, 200 BC-AD 100* [OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964], 28).

ideology.³ These distinctions will be maintained in the following, and the word ‘apocalyptic’ will be used only as an adjective,⁴ except when the terminology original to others is retained, in which case it will be placed in single quotation marks. The term ‘apocalyptic seer’, which is used frequently in this study, refers to the seer who is portrayed as receiving revelations in an apocalypse, not the real author who writes pseudonymously, potentially about his or her own experiences.⁵ At points, it may be helpful to refer to the real authors as ‘apocalypticists’. The real audience of a text will be designated as the ‘terminal audience’, which reflects their final position in the process of textual transmission envisaged in many of the apocalypses.

This study uses the term ‘revelatory episode’ as a designation for the narrative episodes in which an apocalyptic seer receives revelation of some sort. This term is broad enough to accurately refer to visions, dream-visions, bodily or cosmic journeys, and dialogue between a seer and divine being.

The Apocalypse Genre

After an examination of the literature generally recognized as ‘apocalyptic’,

3. Stone argued for distinguishing between an ‘apocalypse’ and ‘apocalyptic eschatology’, with the latter term replacing what he considers to be the more problematic terms ‘apocalyptic’ and ‘apocalypticism’ (Michael E. Stone, “Lists of Revealed Things in the Apocalyptic Literature,” in *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God* [ed. F. M. Cross, W. E. Lemke, and P. E. Miller Jr.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976], 439–43). Hanson advocated the three-fold system of definitions adopted in this study (Paul D. Hanson, “Apocalypticism,” in *IDBSup* [ed. Keith Crim; Nashville: Abingdon, 1976], esp. 29–30).

4. When the adjective apocalyptic is used attributively with a noun, such as in ‘apocalyptic eschatology’ or ‘apocalyptic seer’, it will signify that the noun being qualified is analogous to the material or perspective of the apocalypses. So, eschatology is responsibly called ‘apocalyptic eschatology’ only insofar as that eschatology is analogous to what is found in the apocalypses (this point was made well by Christopher Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* [New York: Crossroad, 1982]). Likewise, a seer is responsibly referred to as an ‘apocalyptic seer’ only inasmuch as he is analogous to the seers found in apocalypses. The point here is that the apocalypses must provide the parameters for the meaningful use of this adjective. This is the methodology advocated by Koch, *Rediscovery*, 23; John J. Collins, “Genre, Ideology and Social Movements in Jewish Apocalypticism,” in *Mysteries and Revelations: Apocalyptic Studies Since the Uppsala Colloquium* (ed. John J. Collins and James H. Charlesworth; JSPSup 9; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 13.

5. Not every apocalypse is pseudonymous. Critical scholarship has usually seen all but the book of Revelation and the *Shepherd of Hermas* as pseudonymous.

the SBL Genres Project published a definition of the genre ‘apocalypse’ in *Semeia* 14:

“Apocalypse” is a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.⁶

The definition describes both the form and content of apocalypses. As a response to the proposals of Aune and Hellholm,⁷ a supplement was later added so as to account for the functional aspect:

[An apocalypse is] intended to interpret present, earthly circumstances in light of the supernatural world and of the future, and to influence both the understanding and the behavior of the audience by means of divine authority.⁸

This definition has enabled scholars to use the designation ‘apocalypse’ with greater precision and clarity,⁹ since it delineates the “common core” that every text in the genre shares.¹⁰ This is the definition of the genre ‘apocalypse’ that will be assumed in the remainder of this study.

One formal aspect of this “common core” is the “human recipient”—or in the terminology of this study, the apocalyptic seer. In the paradigm of the genre which accompanies the above definition,¹¹ the apocalyptic seer is an integral part of an apocalypse’s framework, which involves the “manner of revelation” and the

6. John J. Collins, “Morphology,” 9.

7. David E. Aune, “The Apocalypse of John and the Problem of Genre,” *Semeia* 36 (1986): 65–96; David Hellholm, “The Problem of Apocalyptic Genre and the Apocalypse of John,” *Semeia* 36 (1986): 13–64.

8. Adela Yarbro Collins, “Introduction: Early Christian Apocalypticism,” *Semeia* 36 (1986): 7.

9. E.g., prior to the SBL Genres Project definition, D. S. Russell spoke generally of “apocalyptic writings,” not making much of a distinction between ‘apocalypses’ and other literary forms (Russell, *Method and Message*, 36–38). Contrast this with the greater specificity in his later work, which accounts for the SBL Genres Project definition (D. S. Russell, *Divine Disclosure: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992], 6–13).

10. John J. Collins, “Morphology,” 9.

11. Though the definition describes the “common core” of the genre, which every text in the genre has, the paradigm that accompanies this definition does not attempt to describe the features that every text has, but those that are generally found in texts sharing the “common core.” The paradigm, therefore, is a taxonomy for classifying the variation that is present among texts sharing the genre’s “common core.” On this point, see *Ibid.*, 8–9.

“concluding elements.”¹² Thus, the apocalyptic seer receives visual revelations in the form of visions or epiphanies, and auditory revelations in the form of discourse from, or dialogue with, the mediator. Additionally, the seer may experience an otherworldly journey or copy what he finds written in heavenly books. The framework also details “the circumstances and emotional state” of the seer leading up to receiving the revelation, as well as his reaction to the revelation.¹³ In the concluding portion of the framework, instructions are given to the seer about disseminating the revelation (i.e., to conceal or publish it), and there is a narrative conclusion which “may describe the awakening or return to earth of the recipient, the departure of the revealer or the consequent actions of the recipients.”¹⁴ It is important to note that the portrayal of the apocalyptic seer in an apocalypse is a fixture of the genre itself, which suggests a degree of uniformity across the texts. Thus, chs. 3-4 will reconstruct the generic contours of the apocalypses’ portrayals of their seers. Each text will nevertheless display some variation within the genre confines.

Selection of Data

The primary data to be considered in chs. 3-4 of this study are Jewish and Christian apocalypses that can be reasonably dated before the mid-second century C.E. This requires some explanation.

First, the primary data pool has been restricted to the genre ‘apocalypse’, as defined above. This is not to deny that information about apocalyptic seers can be drawn from texts that are not normally classified as apocalypses. Rather, it is an effect of the singular focus of this study on literary portrayals of apocalyptic seers. Although the Qumran community seems to have been heavily influenced by

12. Ibid., 5

13. Ibid., 6.

14. Ibid., 8.

apocalypses,¹⁵ they did not apparently produce any apocalypses of their own, wherein the Teacher of Righteousness is portrayed as receiving divine revelation through the modes of vision, otherworldly journey, or dialogue with divine beings. Yet, if this study were interested in the historical issues related to apocalyptic seers, such as the tradition-history related to the figure of Enoch, then the Qumran writings and other non-apocalypse documents could not be relegated to secondary status. Likewise, the Pauline Epistles would have to be included if this study were interested in the actual people behind the pseudonyms, who may have perceived themselves as apocalyptic figures or recipients of revelation in their own right.¹⁶ It should be emphasized that the primacy given to the apocalypses is directly related to the special *literary* concern of this study. Since this study is concerned with the literary portrayal of apocalyptic seers, the apocalypses indeed provide the most valuable evidence; they provide the most lucid and elaborate *literary portrayals* of apocalyptic seers.¹⁷

Secondly, only those apocalypses considered to be Jewish or Christian are included in the primary data pool. While this makes the data more manageable, it is based on the conviction that Jewish and Christian apocalypses, not Persian or Gnostic

15. Eight manuscripts of Daniel were found at Qumran (1Q71; 1Q72; 4Q112; 4Q113; 4Q114; 4Q116; 6Q7). Commenting on the Aramaic fragments of *I Enoch* found at Qumran, Wise, Abegg Jr., and Cook say, "Significantly, the remnants of several copies of *I Enoch* in Aramaic were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and it is clear that whoever collected the scrolls considered it a vitally important text" (Michael Wise, Martin Abegg Jr., and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* [Ed; New York: HarperCollins, 2005], 278).

16. On this, see Russell, *Method and Message*, 127–39, 158–77; Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 95–114.

17. Although texts that are classified as testaments are similar to apocalypses in some respects, they do not usually portray their central figure as an apocalyptic seer, as the apocalypses do. Rather than narrating the transmission of revelation from a divine mediator to a human seer, the testaments include predictions and exhortations from a venerable ancient figure to his posterity (see John J. Collins, "Testaments," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* [ed. Michael E. Stone; vol. 2 of *The Literature of the Jewish People in the Period of the Second Temple and the Talmud*; CRINT. Section 2; Assen/Philadelphia: Van Gorcum/Fortress, 1984], 325–55, esp. 330). Since this study is concerned with the literary portrayals of apocalyptic seers, and how these literary portrayals may have shaped Matthew's portrayal of Peter, the testaments do not provide evidence that is directly relevant to this concern, and so have been excluded from the primary data that is considered in chs. 3–4.

ones,¹⁸ provide the most relevant background against which a study of Peter in Matthew should proceed. We are concerned only with the data that most plausibly contributed to, or were part of, the milieu in which Matthew and his sources wrote.¹⁹ Additionally, this study will not treat the Jewish and Christian apocalypses in separate categories, which would create more distortion than clarification, since both represent a continuous tradition, despite their differences.²⁰

Thirdly, only the Jewish and Christian apocalypses that can be reasonably dated to the mid-second century C.E. or earlier are included. This cut-off date allows for the inclusion of the most important Christian apocalypses (i.e., the book of Revelation and *Shepherd of Hermas*) and the Jewish apocalypses responding to the destruction of the temple (i.e., *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and *Apocalypse of Abraham*). Although the apocalypses that are later than this date could be included as relevant data in a larger study, a sufficient sampling of both Jewish and Christian apocalypses are captured by this limit.

There are fourteen texts that fit these criteria: Daniel, *1 Enoch*, *Jubilees*, *Testament of Levi*, *2 Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, *Apocalypse of Abraham*, *Testament of*

18. For an introduction to Persian and Gnostic apocalypses, see respectively, John J. Collins, "Persian Apocalypses," *Semeia* 14 (1979): 207–17; Francis T. Fallon, "The Gnostic Apocalypses," *Semeia* 14 (1979): 123–58.

19. If there were a paucity of extant Jewish and Christian apocalypses, perhaps the others would be more relevant to this study. Fortunately, however, this is not the case, and so only the most relevant data are examined.

20. On the difficulties of determining whether the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha can be accurately classified as 'Jewish', see James R. Davila, "The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha as Background to the New Testament," *ExpTim* 117, no. 2 (2005): 53–57. Russell says, "[T]hey represent a single type of literature with no serious break between them at all, at least where form and presentation are concerned" (Russell, *Method and Message*, 35). Bauckham treats them together as well: "Both classes of apocalypses are equally likely to preserve early Jewish apocalyptic material. Moreover, the two classes can only be adequately studied together, as one class, as well as in relation to older apocalyptic writings" (Richard Bauckham, "The Apocalypses in the New Pseudepigrapha," *JSNT* 26 [1986]: 112). Schüssler Fiorenza nicely holds together the distinctiveness of Christian apocalypticism and its continuity with Jewish apocalypticism (Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *The Phenomenon of Early Christian Apocalyptic*, in *AMWNE* [2 ed.; David Hellholm; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1989], 296).

*Abraham, 3 Baruch, Revelation, Shepherd of Hermas, Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah, Apocalypse of Zephaniah.*²¹

Overview of Apocalypses

It will be helpful to briefly introduce the characteristics and dates of the fourteen apocalypses included in the primary data pool to be considered in chs. 3 and 4.

Daniel

The book of Daniel comprises the court tales of chs. 1-6 and the four revelatory episodes of chs. 7-12, where eschatological mysteries are revealed to Daniel. Critical scholarship dates chs. 7-12 to the second century B.C.E., but there is less certainty about the date of chs. 1-6, which are thought to be earlier. Due to the Aramaic composition of ch. 7, some schemes date it slightly earlier than the other visions, which are composed in Hebrew. For example, Collins concludes that chs. 1-6, which probably circulated independently in some form, were combined with ch. 7, and briefly circulated with it in Aramaic. Shortly thereafter, ch. 1 was translated into Hebrew and combined with the visions of chs. 8-12.²² Regardless of the text's

21. The *Apocalypse of Peter* also fits these criteria. However, as was briefly noted in the previous chapter, the *Apocalypse of Peter* uses Matthew's Gospel as source material. Therefore, it has been excluded from the data pool considered in chs. 3-4 so as to avoid circular argumentation. The other Christian apocalypses that are included in such collections as the New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha (Wilhelm Schneemelcher, ed., *Writings Relating to the Apostles; Apocalypses and Related Subjects* [vol. 2 of *New Testament Apocrypha*; trans. R. McL. Wilson; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1992], 542-752) and the Nag Hammadi Codices (James M. Robinson, gen. ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* [New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990]) have been excluded since they cannot be dated to the mid-second century C.E. or earlier with any degree of certainty. See Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Early Christian Apocalypses," *Semeia* 14 (1979): 61-121 for an extensive overview of the early Christian apocalypses.

22. John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 26-38, which includes a nice survey of the developmental theories. Despite the differences between the two sections, they contain a unified message that Daniel's God is sovereign over the kingdoms of the earth, and the portrayal of Daniel remains consistent throughout. Thus, it is not inappropriate to stress their coherence (as does John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 90).

development, it achieved its final form well before Matthew's Gospel and sources were written.

1 Enoch

In its present form, *1 Enoch* comprises several works: the *Book of the Watchers* (chs. 1-36), the *Similitudes* (chs. 37-71), the *Astronomical Book* (chs. 72-82), the *Book of Dreams* (83-90), and the *Epistle of Enoch* (chs. 91-108). The *Apocalypse of Weeks* (*1 En.* 93:1-10; 91:11-17) is often isolated as a distinct unit within the *Epistle of Enoch*. The discovery of eleven fragments of *1 Enoch* at Qumran, containing parts of all sections except the *Similitudes*, has established the early date (second century B.C.E. or earlier) for most of its contents.²³ Each work that has been subsumed into the corpus of *1 Enoch* either portrays Enoch as receiving insight into cosmological and eschatological mysteries through cosmic journeys and visions, or presupposes that he has.

Jubilees

Several copies of *Jubilees* were found at Qumran, which attests to its early date.²⁴ *Jubilees* is presented as an additional written record of revelation given to Moses during the forty-day and forty-night period that he was on Sinai (cf. Exod 24:18), concerning "what (was) in the beginning and what will occur (in the future), the account of the division of all of the days of the Law and the testimony" (*Jub.* 1:4; cf. 1:26; 23:32).²⁵ *Jubilees* does not include cosmic journeys or visions as the mode

23. Greenfield and Stone have convincingly countered J. T. Milik's arguments for a late date for the *Similitudes* (J. T. Milik, ed., In collaboration with M. Black, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1976], 89-107), and made a plausible case for a first century C.E. date (Jonas C. Greenfield and Michael E. Stone, "The Enochic Pentateuch and the Date of the Similitudes," *HTR* 70, no. 1/2 [1977]: 51-65). Nickelsburg dates the *Similitudes* even earlier, to the late-first century B.C.E. (Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 7).

24. Wintermute sets the date between 161-140 B.C.E. (O. S. Wintermute, "Jubilees," in *OTP*, vol. 2 [ed. James H Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983], 43-44).

25. Some of the impetus for this text may come from Deut 29:29, which distinguishes between the revealed Law and the secret things, concealed as the possession of God. The tradition that God gave Moses additional revelation of eschatological mysteries while he was on Sinai also

of revelation; Moses simply engages in dialogue with an angelic mediator. For this reason, some scholars do not classify the text as an apocalypse. However, as Collins observes, “It remains true...that the *Rahmengattung* or generic framework of *Jubilees* is an apocalypse.”²⁶

Testament of Levi

The *Testament of Levi* is included in the larger work, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Collins says that “[t]he history of composition is one of the most controversial issues in the current study of the Pseudepigrapha.”²⁷ Charles dated the original composition of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* as early as 109-107 B.C.E.,²⁸ but Christian redaction indicates that the text probably reached its final form in the late-second- early-third century C.E. However, in the case of the *Testament of Levi*, the date of composition was probably earlier rather than later. The focus of the *Testament of Levi* on the priesthood and its pollution seems to reflect Jewish concerns most appropriately dated to the Second Temple period.²⁹ This text includes two revelatory episodes—a cosmic journey and a vision—wherein Levi receives revelation concerning the priesthood.

2 *Enoch*

2 *Enoch* comprises two large units of material (Enoch’s cosmic journey [chs. 3-37]; Enoch’s instructions to his children [chs. 38-66]) placed between two smaller units (narrative introduction and Enoch’s introductory vision [chs. 1a-2]; Enoch’s final ascent and narrative conclusion [ch. 67-68]). To this, an account of the

appears in 4 *Ezra* 14:4-6.

26. John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 83.

27. *Ibid.*, 133–34.

28. R. H. Charles, “The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,” in *APOT*, vol. 2 (ed. R. H. Charles; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 289–90.

29. For example, Collins says, “In *Test. Levi* 17:11 the sinful priests of the seventh week, who immediately precede the ‘new priest’ of the eschatological age can be identified plausibly with the hellenizers, on the eve of the Maccabean revolt” (John J. Collins, “Testaments,” 343).

priesthood up to the flood has been appended (chs. 69-73). A wide variety of dates have been proposed for *2 Enoch*, ranging from the first century C.E.³⁰ to the ninth to tenth centuries C.E.³¹ However, the majority of scholars view the text as early rather than late. For example, Andersen acknowledges the enigma surrounding the date and provenance of *2 Enoch*, but the heading to his introduction proposes a late-first century C.E. date,³² and Collins advocates a first century C.E. date in his introduction.³³

4 Ezra

Scholars normally discern a seven-fold structure in *4 Ezra*.³⁴ Although source critics attributed the individual units to different sources,³⁵ more recent scholarship has stressed the apocalypse's overall unity.³⁶ Due to an apparent concern with the destruction of the temple (3:1-2; 6:19; 9:21-23; 12:48), there is wide agreement that *4 Ezra* was published sometime after 70 C.E., most likely towards the end of the first

30. R. H. Charles, "The Book of the Secrets of Enoch," in *APOT*, vol. 2 (ed. R. H. Charles; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 429.

31. Milik and Black, *Books of Enoch*, 110.

32. F. I. Andersen, "2 [Slavonic Apocalypse of] Enoch," in *OTP*, vol. 1 [ed. James H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983], 91, 94-97).

33. John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 243.

34. E.g., G. H. Box, "4 Ezra," in *APOT*, vol. 2 (ed. R. H. Charles; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 542; Alden Lloyd Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil in the Theodicy of 4 Ezra: A Study Illustrating the Significance of Form and Structure for the Meaning of the Book* (SBLDS 29; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977), 121-25; Bruce M. Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," in *OTP*, vol. 1 (ed. James H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983), 517-18; Michael E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra: A Commentary on the Book of Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 28-30; John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 197.

35. E.g., Box identified five sources: a "Salathiel-Apocalypse" (mainly chs. 3-10); the "Eagle-Vision" (chs. 11-12); the "Son of Man Vision" (ch. 13); the "Ezra-legend" (mainly ch. 14); extracts from an "old Ezra-Apocalypse" (4:52-5:13a; 6:11-29) (Box, "4 Ezra," 542, 549-52).

36. So Jacob M. Myers, *I and II Esdras* (AB 42; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974), 119-21. Metzger says that "many scholars today tend to regard chapter 3-14 as representing the author's own conception or handiwork" (Bruce M. Metzger, "Fourth Ezra," 522). Stone views the apocalypse as the work of a single individual, who incorporated pre-existing oral and literary sources (Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 21-23). Knowles makes a compelling case for unity based on the chronological markers for Ezra's revelations, which add up to a forty-day period (Michael P. Knowles, "Moses, the Law, and the Unity of 4 Ezra," *NovT* 31, no. 3 [1989]: 257-74).

century.³⁷ In this apocalypse, eschatological mysteries are revealed to Ezra over a sequence of revelatory episodes, through visions and dialogue with an angelic mediator of revelation.

2 Baruch

Due to its evident concern with the destruction of the temple (4:1-7; 5:1; 6:8-9; 7:1; 8:1-4; 33:2-4; 67:1), and its close relationship with *4 Ezra*,³⁸ most scholars date *2 Baruch* to the end of the first century C.E. or the first two decades of the second century.³⁹ Most scholars also discern similar literary structures in *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*.⁴⁰ As Collins observes, both apocalypses delimit several units in their seven-fold structure with a seven-day fast of the seer; both express the main problem in the early units and contain allegorical visions in the fifth and sixth units; and both conclude with the seer writing in the seventh unit.⁴¹ Moreover, both seers receive disclosures of eschatological mysteries through visions and dialogue with divine beings, but Baruch is involved in a divinely assisted journey over Jerusalem.

Apocalypse of Abraham

The *Apocalypse of Abraham* likely belongs to the same period as *4 Ezra* and

37. E.g., Bruce M. Metzger, "Fourth Ezra," 520; Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 9–10; John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 195–96. Box dates the final publication to 120 C.E., but he dates several of the sources much earlier than this (Box, "4 Ezra," 552–53).

38. In his 1896 edition of the Syriac version of *2 Baruch*, R. H. Charles detailed over 100 passages in *4 Ezra* that were "directly connected or closely parallel" with over 60 passages in *2 Baruch*. These passages, he qualified, represented "only the more important" parallels (R. H. Charles, *The Apocalypse of Baruch: Translated from the Syriac* [London: A. and C. Black, 1896], 169–71).

39. E.g., A. F. J. Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch," in *OTP*, vol. 1 (ed. James H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983), 616–17; Michael E. Stone, "Apocalyptic Literature," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (ed. Michael E. Stone; vol. 2 of *The Literature of the Jewish People in the Period of the Second Temple and the Talmud*; CRINT. Section 2; Assen/Philadelphia: Van Gorcum/Fortress, 1984), 409–10.

40. E.g., Gwendolyn B. Saylor, *Have the Promises Failed? A Literary Analysis of 2 Baruch* (SBLDS 72; Chico, Cal.: Scholars Press, 1984), 11–39; Frederick James Murphy, *The Structure and Meaning of Second Baruch* (SBLDS 78; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 11–29, who includes a helpful chart of the various delimitations proposed for the seven units.

41. John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 222–23.

2 Baruch, since it also exhibits concern about the destruction of the temple (27:3).⁴²

It is structured similarly to the book of Daniel, with narrative material introducing revelatory episodes. The narrative introduction (i.e., chs. 1-8) clearly anticipates the apocalypse, and the apocalypse (i.e., chs. 9-32) clearly assumes the narrative introduction (cf. 10:12 to 8:6; 26:3-4 to 4:6).⁴³ The narrative introduction presents Abraham as one who repudiates idolatry. Following the destruction of his father's house as punishment for idolatry, an angel escorts Abraham to Horeb, where he sacrifices to God and experiences a cosmic journey, by which cosmological and eschatological mysteries are revealed to him.

Testament of Abraham

The *Testament of Abraham* is normally dated around the end of the first century C.E.⁴⁴ The ironic portrayal of its seer is a significant difference between this text and the other apocalypses.⁴⁵ The main revelatory episode is a cosmic journey, during which Abraham tours the earth and observes the post-mortem fate of the wicked and righteous.

3 Baruch

Like *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, *3 Baruch* also exhibits concern about the destruction of the temple, which suggests a date after 70

42. Rubinkiewicz, following others, dates it between 70 C.E. and the mid-second century C.E. (R. Rubinkiewicz, "Apocalypse of Abraham," in *OTP*, vol. 1 [ed. James H Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983], 683; also Stone, "Apocalyptic Literature," 416; John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 225).

43. Rubinkiewicz concludes that chs. 1-6 are integral to the apocalypse, and were written by the same author as the apocalypse (Rubinkiewicz, "Apocalypse of Abraham," 682).

44. E.g., E. P. Sanders, "Testament of Abraham," in *OTP*, vol. 1 [ed. James H Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983], 875). Allison dates it to before 115-117 C.E. (Dale C. Allison Jr., *Testament of Abraham* [CEJL; Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003], 34-40). However, Davila's discussion of the provenance of *T. Ab.* cautions against arriving at too firm a conclusion (James R. Davila, *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian, or Other?* [JSJSup 105; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005], 199-207).

45. Cf. Jared W. Ludlow, *Abraham Meets Death: Narrative Humor in the Testament of Abraham* (JSPSup 41; London/New York: Sheffield, 2002), 8-47; Allison Jr., *Testament of Abraham*, 51-52.

C.E. (1:1-3).⁴⁶ However, as Stone notes, the destroyed temple does not have the same existential immediacy as in some of these other apocalypses, which may indicate a second-century date.⁴⁷ The apocalypse contains one extended revelatory episode, in which Baruch experiences a cosmic journey. The text is surprisingly unconcerned with eschatology.

Revelation

The book of Revelation is predominantly dated to the end of Domitian's reign (ca. 95-96 C.E.), though some argue for a date shortly after Nero's reign (68-69 C.E.).⁴⁸ The first revelatory episode in the apocalypse is an epiphany of the risen Jesus to John, during which Jesus dictates letters to the seven churches. The letters are followed by a sequence of three spiritual journeys, which allow John to observe heavenly activities and receive disclosures of eschatological mysteries. The seer, John, is thought to be the real author, and not a pseudonym.⁴⁹

46. John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 248.

47. Stone, "Apocalyptic Literature," 412 n. 158. Based on several similarities with *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, Nickelsburg dates *3 Baruch* to the end of the first, or the beginning of the second century C.E. (George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981], 299–303; also Daniel C. Harlow, *The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch [3 Baruch] in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity* [SVTP 12; Leiden/New York/Köln: E. J. Brill, 1996], 14). Hughes proposes a date shortly after 136 C.E. (H. M. Hughes, "The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch or III Baruch," in *APOT*, vol. 2 [ed. R. H. Charles; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913], 530) but Gaylord Jr. more broadly dates the original work to the first two centuries C.E. (H. E. Gaylord Jr., "3 [Greek Apocalypse of] Baruch," in *OTP*, vol. 1 [ed. James H Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983], 655–57). Kulik, somewhat tentatively, posits a date before Origen (Alexander Kulik, *3 Baruch: Greek-Slavonic Apocalypse of Baruch* [CEJL; Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG, 2010], 12).

48. Beale surmises that "[t]he early date could be right, but the cumulative weight of evidence points to the late date" (G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999], 4). Aune brings both major positions together since he views the apocalypse as the result of editorial activity, with the first edition being composed based on traditions that date to the 60's, and the final edition being published towards the end of Domitian's reign (David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5* [WBC 52; Dallas: Word, 1997], lviii).

49. Scholars normally view the 'John' of Revelation as a different figure than the 'John' of the Gospel or General Epistles. See the concise overview of the issues in D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 700–707.

Shepherd of Hermas

The various portions of the *Shepherd of Hermas* were written between the end of the first century C.E. and the mid-second century C.E., probably in Rome.⁵⁰ In many ways, it is an anti-apocalypse, since it inverts many of the genre's typical features, portrays its seer in a somewhat ironic manner, and relays unique contents⁵¹ through a structure that is far different than that of the other apocalypses.⁵² Despite its differences from the other apocalypses considered in this study, it portrays Hermas as receiving successive disclosures of what might be most accurately classified as ecclesiological mysteries. Like the book of Revelation, the *Shepherd of Hermas* is generally not thought to be pseudonymous.

Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah

Until the late-twentieth century, scholars have mainly viewed the *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah* as a composite text,⁵³ consisting of the *Martyrdom of Isaiah*

50. Holmes cautiously dates the first four visions (i.e., *Herm.* 1-24) to the end of the first century or beginning of the second, and concludes that the final editing probably took place in the mid-second century, based on the information provided by the Muratorian Canon, lines 73-77 (Michael W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers* [3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007], 445-47). Osiek similarly suggests a range spanning from the end of the first to the mid-second century C.E. (Carolyn Osiek, *Shepherd of Hermas: A Commentary* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999], 18-20).

51. Regarding the contents, Vielhauer and Strecker say that "the book is an Apocalypse in its form and style, but not in its contents, since it includes no disclosures of the eschatological future or of the world beyond" (P. Vielhauer and Georg Strecker, "Apocalyptic in Early Christianity," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, rev. ed., vol. 2 [ed. Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher; trans. R. McL. Wilson; Louisville, Ken.: Westminster John Knox, 2003], 593).

52. E.g., it is generally agreed that Hermas is not a pseudonym, but the true author of the text; the text does not present him as a venerable figure, but as one who is "double-minded;" nowhere does the text refer to the contents of his revelations as 'mysteries' or 'secrets'; he is told to publish the contents of his revelations widely rather than seal them up; the apocalypse reflects a supremely Christian perspective, which is nearly void of the Jewish symbols and imagery found even in the other Christian apocalypses; likewise, there is very little allusion to or echo of the OT in this massive text. The ironic portrayal of Hermas will be discussed in ch. 4 of this study.

53. See M. A. Knibb, "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah," in *OTP*, vol. 2 (ed. James H Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1985), 149 for a discussion of the confusing nomenclature associated with this text. Based on the fact that Epiphanius refers to the whole work as the *Ascension of Isaiah*, Bauckham argues that the title, *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah*, is misleading (Richard Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* [NovTSup 93; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1998], 366). Although Bauckham's point is valid, the present study uses the title *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah* for the purpose of conforming to standard scholarly designations, and not as an evaluation of the text's unity.

(i.e., *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 1-5), a portion of a lost *Testament of Hezekiah* (i.e., *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 3:13-4:22), and the *Ascension of Isaiah* (i.e., *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 6-11).⁵⁴

However, Bauckham has more recently drawn attention to the work of Italian scholars, whose research had not been factored into the major English discussions of this text. Building on Norelli's thesis that chs. 1-5 are a unified literary composition, which was attached to the already circulating chs. 6-11, Bauckham made a cogent case that the entire work is the product of a single author.⁵⁵ His main argument is that the book of Daniel provides a genre precedent for narrative material introducing visionary material, and that this was the model used by the author of *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah*.⁵⁶ Bauckham dates the composition as a whole between 70-80 C.E.⁵⁷ At a minimum, his proposal demonstrates the plausibility that the two main sections of the text circulated together at an early point—perhaps already in the first century. Isaiah's revelations are granted to him by way of a spiritual ascent through the seven heavens.

54. The *Martyrdom of Isaiah* is thought to be the oldest section, possibly dating to the second century B.C.E., based on analogy with other stories of martyrdom originating from this period (e.g., 2 Macc 6:18-7:42) (See George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Stories of Biblical and Early Post-Biblical Times," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* [ed. Michael E. Stone; vol. 2 of *The Literature of the Jewish People in the Period of the Second Temple and the Talmud*; CRINT, Section 2; Assen/Philadelphia: Van Gorcum/Fortress, 1984], 52–56 for support of this date). In this work, there is an obvious Christian interpolation from 3:13-4:22. Charles posited that this interpolation comes from a lost *Testament of Hezekiah*. Charles proposed that a single Christian redactor, working with three sources (i.e., *Mart. Isa.*, *T. Hez.*, and *Ascen. Isa.*) is responsible for the form of the text as it now stands (R. H. Charles, *The Ascension of Isaiah* [London: Adam and Charles Black, 1900], 36–43). Knibb addresses some problems with Charles' views about the *Testament of Hezekiah*, but remains open to the possibility that 3:13-4:22 may come from an independent work that is no longer extant (Knibb, "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah," 147–49). But it could simply represent the creative work of the Christian redactor who is responsible for joining the *Ascension of Isaiah* (i.e., *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 6-11) to the *Martyrdom of Isaiah*. Knibb makes a compelling case for dating 3:13-4:22 to the end of the first century C.E. (Ibid., 149). Charles dates the *Ascension of Isaiah* to the end of the first century C.E., but Knibb more cautiously dates it to the second century C.E. (Charles, *The Ascension of Isaiah*, 44–45; Knibb, "Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah," 149–50).

55. Bauckham, *Fate of the Dead*, 363–90.

56. Ibid., 371–74. Bauckham rightly argues that the *Apocalypse of Abraham* also exhibits this type of structure. Furthermore, the *Book of Watchers* (*1 En.* 1-36) probably provides another early analogy of visions appended to narrative in a unified work.

57. Ibid., 381–90.

Apocalypse of Zephaniah

The *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* is normally dated to the first or second century C.E.⁵⁸ In the extant portions of this fragmentary text, Zephaniah is taken on a cosmic journey, during which he travels to Hades and hears about the judgment of the wicked.

Methodology

The difficulties posed by the apocalypses themselves, mainly stemming from their composite nature, are widely recognized. Therefore, this section proposes an approach to mitigating these problems as they impinge upon our central concern with the influence of the apocalypse genre on the portrayal of Peter in Matthew.

Apocalypses as Composite Documents

One criterion placed upon the data considered in chs. 3-4 is that they must be apocalypses, as defined by the SBL Genres Project in *Semeia* 14. However, an apocalypse may not stand alone as an independent text, but may be situated within a larger text, which is not itself an apocalypse. For example, according to the SBL definition and paradigm, the book of Daniel is formally an apocalypse only from chs. 7-12. For the concerns of this study, this raises the question of whether chs. 1-6, which are normally considered to be legends or court tales, should be analyzed as data for the portrayal of Daniel as an apocalyptic seer. A similar situation is encountered in the *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah*. Chapters 6-11 constitute an apocalypse, though chs. 1-5 may be classified as legends or court tales. This question becomes even more pressing in the cases of the *Testament of Abraham*, where chs. 15-32 comprise the apocalypse, the *Testament of Levi*, where the apocalypse is confined to chs. 2-5, and *Jubilees*, where the apocalypse is restricted to ch. 23 alone.

58. John J. Collins, "The Jewish Apocalypses," *Semeia* 14 (1979): 42-43; O. S. Wintermute, "Apocalypse of Zephaniah," in *OTP*, vol. 1 (ed. James H Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983), 500-501.

A few comments about the broad methodology applied to these situations are in order here.

A weakness of the SBL Genres Project definition is that it does not adequately address the relationship of apocalypses to other genres with which they are merged in a single text. This is a result of the study's approach to literary genre, which focuses on the independent intelligibility of a text.⁵⁹ What this means is that a text must be intelligible as an independent unit in order to qualify as a member of a literary genre:

The texts which make up the genre must be intelligible as independent units. This does not necessarily mean that they have ever existed as independent works. In many cases recognizable units are embedded in larger works and we cannot be sure whether they ever circulated independently. If they constitute coherent wholes which are intelligible without reference to their present context, they can qualify as members of a genre.⁶⁰

It is indeed reasonable to assume that a textual unit must be intelligible in order to qualify as a member of a particular genre. However, this becomes somewhat problematic when genres are defined by coherent textual units "without reference to their present context." Simply because a text may be intelligible as an independent unit, irrespective of its present literary context, does not mean that it is not *more* intelligible with reference to that context. This cautions against holding apart genres that an ancient author or editor may have considered as unified. Collins himself relaxes the boundaries around the genre 'apocalypse' in his later work:

In my own discussion of Jewish apocalypses I identified some partial texts (e.g. Daniel 7-12, *Jubilees* 23) as apocalypses. I would now speak simply of the dominant genre of these works as wholes. I would also allow for cases of mixed genre (e.g. *Jubilees*) which have significant affinities with more than one genre.⁶¹

Although speaking of the dominant genre of a single text may not be as accurate as

59. Sanders describes this as a problem of the relationship of the parts to the whole. He links it to a larger problem of differing scholarly understandings of what a 'genre' is (E. P. Sanders, "The Genre of Palestinian Apocalypses," in *AMWNE* [ed. D. Hellholm; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1983], 454).

60. John J. Collins, "Morphology," 1.

61. John J. Collins, "Genre, Ideology and Social Movements," 14.

acknowledging every genre contained in that text, it is certainly more practical, and remains, in most cases, sufficiently descriptive of the texts.⁶² Therefore, this study will treat the non-apocalypse portions of composite-genre texts as data for the literary portrayals of apocalyptic seers, due to their close literary proximity to an apocalypse (as it is strictly defined). There are four reasons for this approach.

First, one of the striking features of apocalypses is the amalgamation of a variety of literary forms.⁶³ Perhaps the most prominent forms are visions, which are creatively manipulated and often subsumed into the larger form of a cosmic journey. In the case of *1 Enoch*, the many visions received during Enoch's cosmic journeys are organized into a testament to his sons, which provides the overarching literary scheme of *1 Enoch* in its final form.⁶⁴ Similarly, in the book of Revelation, the visions that John witnesses, along with his journeys "in the spirit," are combined with smaller epistles (chs. 2-3) and a larger epistolary introduction (1:4-8), but ultimately introduced as the Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. The point here is that one of the hallmarks of apocalypses seems to be their creative manipulation of internal literary forms (those contained within the framework of the apocalypse) and external literary forms (those that provide the literary context for the apocalypse).⁶⁵ This cautions against separating an apocalypse from its literary context strictly on literary-

62. Note Aune's caution against appealing too quickly to the rubric of "mixed genres": "[T]he conception of 'mixed genres' is theoretically infelicitous and should be used only as a court of last resort, for if the notion of a *mixtum compositum* is too quickly applied to a problematic text, the possibility of achieving a generic understanding of the structure of the entire text is given up without a struggle" (Aune, "Problem of Genre," 67).

63. These literary complexities associated with the 'apocalypse' genre are acknowledged by the SBL Genres Project: "The particular combination of elements involved here [i.e., the elements listed in the 'apocalypse' paradigm] does not necessarily always constitute an entire independent work. It may be a subordinate part of a larger work... Conversely, an apocalypse may include subsidiary literary forms which are independent of the genre... Further, the apocalyptic paradigm, either entirely or in part, may be repeated more than once in a single apocalypse" (John J. Collins, "Morphology," 8).

64. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 22-28.

65. John J. Collins, "Morphology," 8.

formal grounds, and viewing the apocalypse as an isolated entity during interpretation.⁶⁶

Second, the literary context (external literary forms) of an apocalypse probably functioned as an extension of the apocalypse's narrative framework. As the SBL Genres Project definition and paradigm indicate, an apocalypse has a narrative framework wherein revelation is mediated to a human recipient in the form of visions, epiphanies, and otherworldly journeys, etc.⁶⁷ This narrative framework also includes information about the seer's disposition leading up to receiving the revelation, and his reaction after receiving it. Information about the seer's disposition often occurs as a literary-formal introduction to the presentation of a vision. For example, in the book of Daniel, the first vision opens with the following combination of a third- and first-person introduction: "In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in bed. Then he wrote down the dream: I, Daniel, saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea..." (Dan 7:1-2). The second, third, and fourth visions are introduced similarly (8:1; 9:20-21; 10:1-4). However, between the conclusion of the second vision (8:27) and the literary-formal introduction to the third vision (9:20-21), there is an interlude where Daniel prays, confessing the sins that have caused the exile (9:1-19). Collins correctly remarks that this prayer is a subsidiary literary form, independent of the apocalypse genre, despite its presence within the apocalypse of chs. 7-12.⁶⁸ Yet, this prayer seems to function as an extension of the literary-formal introduction to the third vision (i.e., 9:20-21).⁶⁹ Indeed, this literary-formal introduction refers back to the prayer: "While I was speaking, and was praying and

66. It may be necessary to separate an apocalypse from its literary context for the sake of creating a genre definition, as in the SBL Genres Project. Yet, no such clear separation is valid during interpretation, since the apocalypse exists in relationship with its immediate literary context.

67. *Ibid.*, 6.

68. *Ibid.*, 8.

69. Collins views the prayer as introductory material to the revelation (John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 358).

confessing my sins and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God on behalf of the holy mountain of my God..." (9:20).

Thus, the prayer does not constitute a *formal element* of the third vision, but it functions as an extension of the literary-formal introduction to the vision.⁷⁰ This relationship between the prayer and the vision in ch. 9 is analogous to the relationship between the court tales of chs. 1-6, and the apocalypse of chs. 7-12. Although the court tales lie beyond the framework of the apocalypse, they function as extensions of it, and so should factor into an analysis of how the apocalypse portrays Daniel as its seer.⁷¹ In some cases, then, external literary forms function as extensions of an apocalypse's narrative framework.⁷²

Third, as the supplement proposed in *Semeia* 36 indicates, apocalypses were meant to persuade their audiences via divine authority—through divine revelation. The effectiveness of an apocalypse in doing so depended to a large degree on the credibility of the channel of revelation, which consisted of the apocalyptic seer, the text, and the chain of textual transmission. The apocalyptic seer is obviously the most important, and foundational, component in the channel of revelation since he is the human connection to the divine revelation.⁷³ His personal credentials contributed to

70. Since prayers offered by the seer function as a preludes to revelatory episodes in several apocalypses (e.g., *4 Ezra* 3:4-36; 5:22-30; 6:38-59; 9:28-37; *2 Bar.* 10:5-12:4; 21:4-26; 35:2-4; 38:1-4; 48:2-24; 54:1-22; *3 Bar.* 1:2; *Lad. Jac.* 2:5-22), the field could benefit from further research into the question of how prayers figure into the genre paradigm.

71. On the pairing of introductory legends to apocalypses, Rowland says, "For the apocalypticist the stories about the hero, derived as they are from Scripture or tradition, provide an important framework for the revelations given to the seer" (Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 62).

72. Collins makes a helpful distinction between the immediate and extended portions of an apocalypse's framework: "We may distinguish between the *immediate* and *extended* frameworks. The immediate framework consists of an introduction and a conclusion... Several apocalypses have also an extended framework consisting of stories about the recipient (as in Daniel and *Apocalypse of Abraham*) or providing a larger context for the revelation (e.g., the *Book of Watchers*, *2 Baruch*, *Testament of Abraham*). This extended framework may be loosely structured and incorporate material that was originally independent (as in Daniel). It is not an essential part of the genre but it is by no means exceptional" (John J. Collins, *Daniel, With an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature* [FOTL 20; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984], 5).

73. It should be recognized, however, that the channel of revelation would also include a heavenly or otherworldly component, in that the revelation ultimately originated with God (perhaps on heavenly tablets) and was mediated by angelic figures to the seer. But the apocalyptic seer is the

the text's overall persuasiveness. In addition to the fact that the revelations were always bestowed upon venerable figures,⁷⁴ apocalypses often explicitly highlighted the credentials of their seers through the words of the divine mediator. Gabriel, for example, says that he has arrived in answer to Daniel's prayer because Daniel is "greatly beloved" (9:23).⁷⁵ This estimation of Daniel is reiterated by the unnamed angelic figure in the next vision as well (10:11, 19). Daniel's credibility as an apocalyptic seer is surely asserted and supported by these angelic pronouncements of divine favor. Yet the court tales also demonstrate his credentials of righteous character and unrivaled insight. In chs. 1-6, the reader is apprised of Daniel's unsurpassed pedigree (1:4, 19), his blameless character and fidelity to the God of Israel (1:8; 6:4-5, 10, 23), and his ascendancy in the Babylonian kingdom (6:3). Most importantly, the court tales inform the reader of Daniel's ability to understand and interpret mysteries (1:17, 20; 2:19-20, 27-30, 47; 4:8-9; 5:10-12), which is crucial background information for the apocalypse of chs. 7-12.⁷⁶ The external literary forms, then, operate in tandem with the apocalypse to present Daniel's credentials, which ultimately contributed to the apocalypse's intended function. In texts that demonstrate a similar relationship between the apocalypse and the external literary forms, it is necessary to consider both as evidence for the literary portrayal of the apocalyptic seer.

most important component on the this-worldly portion of the revelatory channel. The book of Revelation illustrates well the divine component in the chain of transmission: "The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John" (Rev 1:1).

74. A possible exception to this is Hermas, in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, who may not have been venerable. This will be discussed further in chs. 3-4.

75. ὅτι ἐλεεινὸς εἶ (LXX); ὅτι ἀνὴρ ἐπιθυμιῶν σὺ εἶ (Th); כי חמודות אתה (MT).

76. Rowland says that stories such as the court tales in Dan 1-6 became "an important component of the apocalyptic form," though they usually lacked revelatory content (Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 13). On the close relationship of the court tales and the apocalypse, and the similar revelatory tone found in both, see John J. Collins, "The Court-Tales in Daniel and the Development of Apocalyptic," *JBL* 94 (1975): 218-34.

Finally, regardless of whether a given apocalypse ever circulated independently, at some point it was placed together with other material, presumably because this arrangement was deemed to be fitting and meaningful, and not just out of logistical necessity or by accident in textual transmission.⁷⁷ Thus, the editor(s) of any given arrangement intended for the apocalypse to be read in light of its literary context. This conclusion is especially reasonable in texts where the apocalyptic seer is also the main character in the non-apocalypse portions of the text. Admittedly, it is difficult in the case of some texts with scant manuscript attestation to ascertain whether the editorial arrangement took place before the mid-second century C.E., which would be the relevant cut-off date for this study.

The Relevance of Apocalypses Post-dating the Gospel of Matthew

Since some of the texts listed above are, of course, later than Matthew and his sources, it is necessary to clarify why these later apocalypses should qualify as admissible data.

First, the later apocalypses are relevant since the main claim of this study does not depend for its viability on demonstrating *direct* literary influence of any one text upon Matthew or his source material, though direct literary influence seems certain at least in the case of the book of Daniel (cf. Matt 24:15). Rather, the argument is that apocalypses (as a genre of literature) were part of the literary milieu in which the portrayal of Peter was constructed in Matthew's Gospel and sources. This claim only requires that Matthew and the authors of his sources were familiar with the genre 'apocalypse' in the same way that they were familiar with the other

77. Thus, in the case of *4 Ezra*, the editorial arrangement of the final form leads M. E. Stone to emphasize a hermeneutic of coherence, even in the face of apparent logical inconsistencies between the different sections of the text: "In my view, however, not strict logical consistency but coherency is a controlling category which must guide us in understanding the book. The book made sense to its author, to its readers: our task is to discover how" (Michael E. Stone, "On Reading an Apocalypse," in *Mysteries and Revelations: Apocalyptic Studies Since the Uppsala Colloquium* [John J. Collins and James H. Charlesworth; JSPSup 9; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991], 66).

genres available for use and adaptation.⁷⁸ In other words, the argument is that the apocalypse genre influenced the portrayal of Peter in Matthew, and not necessarily that his portrayal was influenced by any of the texts used as data to understand this genre.⁷⁹ The texts qualifying as data for chs. 3-4, therefore, assist in reconstructing the broad contours of the portrayal of apocalyptic seers in the apocalypse genre, regardless of whether any of these texts were read by Matthew or the authors of his sources. Apocalypses post-dating the Gospel of Mark, Q, and the Gospel of Matthew, then, are helpful for understanding the genre in general, just as the earliest apocalypses are.⁸⁰

Secondly, the later apocalypses are important to consider since they provide data for the Christian use of the genre. Although this study considers the Jewish and Christian apocalypses to be a continuous stream of tradition, there are nevertheless important developments in the Christian apocalypses that must be accounted for in a study of this nature. The book of Revelation, for example, provides evidence for the early Christian understanding of Jesus as a mediator of revelation in some sense (cf. Rev 1:12-3:22), developing the role of angelic mediators in a distinctively Christian direction.⁸¹ This may provide a helpful analogy to the way in which the genre influenced the portrayal of Peter's interaction with Jesus in Matthew's Gospel and sources. Certainly, care must be taken to avoid anachronism, but the later

78. It should be noted here that the designation 'apocalypse' is a modern one, derived from the book of Revelation, and applied to texts that are analogous to it. The main claim of this study therefore requires that Matthew be aware of the literary genre that scholars now designate 'apocalypse'.

79. Hypothetically, then, Matthew may have learned or become aware of the genre through exposure to apocalypses that are no longer extant, without ever being exposed to those that are extant. In this hypothetical scenario, the extant apocalypses would merely furnish evidence for the kind of literary conventions and forms that other non-extant apocalypses likely also exhibited. Thus, they would provide valuable evidence for determining how analogous texts in the genre may have influenced the portrayal of Peter in Matthew.

80. The fact that apocalypses spanning several hundred years in their likely dates of original composition can be grouped together in a coherent genre, 'apocalypse', documents a level of diachronic continuity among these texts.

81. This development is also present within the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

apocalypses are the only available data for the Christian use of the genre, and they should not be neglected.

Third, and related to the previous point, it is important to include the later apocalypses in the data pool considered in chs. 3-4 for the purpose of tracing the trajectory of the genre from the early texts to the later ones. When a wider chronological sampling of the genre is considered, the later apocalypses can often clarify the earlier ones.⁸² The later apocalypses can sometimes indicate the parameters for variation within the genre, which can shed some light on an earlier text's adaptation of the genre. This usefulness of the later apocalypses is demonstrated in the case of the *Shepherd of Hermas*, which probably represents an inversion of the standard positive portrayal of apocalyptic seers. Hermas is frequently excoriated by the mediators of revelation, which is a departure from the earlier apocalypses—yet it assumes them. This may indicate a certain level of flexibility in the genre that existed at an earlier point. The later apocalypses are potentially useful for recovering earlier developments within the genre that are not documented by the extant early apocalypses themselves.

Peter and the Disciples

The focus of this study—to determine the influence of generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers on Matthew's portrayal of Peter—has implications for the approach in Part 2. First, the discussion there will not be restricted to passages in which Peter features. The reason for this is that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has not only influenced Matthew's portrayal of Peter, but it has also shaped his portrayal of larger groups of disciples—groups to which Peter belongs. Therefore, these passages cannot be neglected without impairing the accuracy of conclusions concerning Peter. Indeed, the survey of research in the previous chapter has indicated just how closely

82. Bauckham, *Fate of the Dead*, 2.

conclusions about Peter are bound up with conclusions about the disciples. Second, not every passage in which Peter features prominently will be discussed in detail, since not every aspect of his portrayal has been influenced by that of apocalyptic seers. The unique focus of this study precludes a comprehensive analysis of his portrait.

Conclusion

In summary, the data considered in chs. 3-4 meet the following criteria: 1) They conform to the SBL Genres Project definition of an apocalypse; 2) They are classified as Jewish or Christian apocalypses; 3) They were written before the mid-second century C.E.

Since the apocalypses are often situated among other genres, the general methodology will be to use the whole text (i.e., the apocalypse, with its internal genres, and also the genres external to the framework of the apocalypse) as evidence for the portrayal of the apocalyptic seer.

Part 2 treats in detail only those passages where the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has shaped the portrayal of Peter, regardless of whether he appears especially prominently among the groups of disciples to which he belongs.

CHAPTER 3

EXCLUSIVE RECIPIENTS OF REVEALED MYSTERIES

Introduction

Apocalypses depict the exceptional disclosure of divine revelation to a human recipient. Prior to the disclosure of this revelation, it was concealed beyond the normal capabilities of human observation, and beyond the scope of previous revelation.¹ Thus, the apocalypses frequently refer to their revelatory contents as ‘mysteries’ or ‘secrets’.² The arcane nature of these mysteries is matched by the restrictive manner of their disclosure, which occurs in two phases. During the first phase of disclosure, mysteries are exclusively revealed to a privileged seer through divine agency. In this way heavenly mysteries are transferred to the realm of humanity. As a result of this exclusive disclosure, and normally in response to divine commissioning, the seer then initiates the second phase of disclosure, which involves transmitting these revealed mysteries via textual medium to the terminal audience for

1. To ancient Judaism, the Torah and Prophets were, of course, God’s authoritative revelation. However, this revelation was not comprehensive in scope. From very early on, the matters that God had not disclosed were broadly recognized as ‘secret things’, הַסֵּתֶר, τὰ κρυπτά (Deut 29:29 [28 MT/LXX]; cf. 1QS 5:11-12), divinely concealed from the realm of humanity. The apocalypses are textual artefacts that betray the conviction, held by some, that God occasionally disclosed these secrets.

2. E.g., Dan 2:18-47; 4:9; *1 En.* 103:2; 104:10-12; 106:19; *2 Bar.* 48:3; 60:1; 81:4; *3 Bar.* 1:5, 8; 2:5; *4 Ezra* 12:36, 38; *T. Levi* 2:10. Bornkamm presents the full range of lexical data in ‘apocalyptic’ and beyond (G. Bornkamm, “μυστήριον, μυσέω,” in *TDNT*, vol. 4, 802–28). Rowland argues that the disclosure of mysteries is the distinguishing mark of ‘apocalyptic’ (Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 14). He identifies four types of mysteries: 1) what is above, 2) what is beneath, 3) what was beforetime, and 4) what will be hereafter (Ibid., 76). Bockmuehl adds a category of illicitly revealed mysteries, which feature prominently in *1 En.* 1-17 (Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity*, 32, 40–41). ‘Mystery’ also featured prominently at Qumran (see, Samuel I. Thomas, *The ‘Mysteries’ of Qumran: Mystery, Secrecy, and Esoterism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* [Early Judaism and Its Literature 25; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009]), where it was closely linked to exegetical insight.

whom they are ultimately intended and supremely relevant. The apocalyptic seer is the nexus between these two phases of disclosure, functioning as the exclusive recipient of divine revelation in the first phase, and the custodian of exclusive revelation in the second. Exclusivity, therefore, is a key component of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers.

Although every apocalypse presupposes the exclusivity of its seer, not every apocalypse explicitly highlights this characteristic in its portrayal of him. In several of the apocalypses considered in this study, the seer's exclusivity remains tacit, asserted only indirectly by his exalted reputation in authoritative tradition.³ However, the purpose of this chapter is to detail the typical features of the apocalypses that *explicitly* contribute to, or directly result from, the portrayal of the seer as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries. By identifying and analyzing specific textual features of the apocalypses that are related to the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, we will later be in a position to determine whether and how this generic portrayal shaped the portrayals of Peter in Matthew's Gospel and source material (Part 2). The features we shall discuss are the following:

1. Exclusionary Statements: A divine being (usually an angelic mediator) or the seer himself utters statements which plainly indicate that the revelation in view has been exclusively granted to the seer among humans, or that the seer is one of only a few humans to whom certain mysteries have been disclosed. Such statements have the effect of excluding all humans, other than the seer, from having access to the mysteries that have been exclusively revealed to him—hence the term *exclusionary statements*.

2. Narrative Isolation: Apocalypses normally include details about the setting in which revelation is delivered to the seer. These details often construct isolated narrative settings—hence the term *narrative isolation*—wherein the seer receives revelation. Oftentimes, narrative isolation is the result of a flat statement that the seer was alone or by himself. Elsewhere, however, narrative isolation is constructed more subtly, by separating the seer

3. The pseudonymous attribution of revelation to an exalted figure from past tradition is a typical feature of texts conforming to the apocalypse genre (so, Koch, *Rediscovery*, 26; John J. Collins, "Morphology," 6), though not an essential one (*contra* Bruce W. Jones, "More About the Apocalypse as Apocalyptic," *JBL* 87, no. 3 [1968]: 325–27, who argues that the book of Revelation is not an apocalypse, since it is not pseudonymous).

from all other narrative characters. Narrative isolation both preserves and signals the seer's exclusive access to the mysteries that are revealed to him.

3. Dissemination Details: Since the apocalyptic seer has received an exclusive disclosure of mysteries, and since these revealed mysteries are ultimately intended for the terminal audience who lives on the cusp of eschatological fulfillment, the apocalypses include details related to the seer's dissemination of his revelations—hence the term *dissemination details*. Dissemination details are normally found either in the injunctions that a divine mediator gives to the seer, or in the seer's own comments, concerning the transmission of his revelations.

The remainder of this chapter discusses these features as they occur in the fourteen apocalypses composing the primary data pool. It should be noted, however, that all three features are not found in every apocalypse. The procedure will be to move from the earlier apocalypses to the later ones, though chronological precision is, of course, impossible to achieve.

Daniel

Narrative Isolation

Daniel's final revelatory episode of chs. 7-12 includes details about the setting in which he experienced an epiphany and engaged in dialogue with a divine being about the historical events leading up to the end. Daniel specifies that he was "standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris)" (10:4). As the following context indicates, there were others with him in this location. It is possible that this location had special revelatory significance,⁴ and that these others were figures who, like Daniel, were pursuing revelation of some sort.⁵ Following Daniel's description

4. It may be that the "great river" and other such bodies of water were locations where seers would pursue revelations (cf. Ezek 1:1; *1 En.* 13:7; cf. also Dan 8:2).

5. It seems that the vision recounted in 10:5-12:13 is a response to Daniel's three-week period of mourning and fasting, when he is pursuing understanding (cf. 10:12) of a previous revelation, alluded to in 10:1. Although Collins argues that the revelation mentioned in 10:1 refers to the revelation that follows (John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 372), and Goldingay seems to interpret 10:1 as referring the vision in ch. 9 (John E. Goldingay, *Daniel* [WBC 30; Dallas: Word, 1989], 287), there are reasons to conclude that 10:1 refers to a revelation given to Daniel, which is not presented in the text, and that chs. 10-12 provide its explanation. The historical review of chs. 10-12 is delivered by an angel (as explanations normally are) and it is plainly presented, apart from symbolic imagery, which is characteristic of explanations to visions and not usually of the visions themselves (cf. the imagery used in the historical review of *1 En.* 85-90).

of the angelic epiphany, he reports, “I, Daniel, alone [לְבַדִּי ; μόνος (Th); omitted by OG] saw the vision; the people who were with me did not see the vision, though great trembling fell upon them, and they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone [לְבַדִּי ; μόνος] to see this great vision” (Dan 10:7-8a). First, this information restricts the perception of the epiphany to Daniel among the people present. Although they recognize the angelic presence to some extent, and so exhibit the normal response of human fear (cf. 8:17), they do not perceive the vision as Daniel does. Second, these details restrict the disclosure—specifically, the disclosure of eschatological mysteries in an historical review—to Daniel by physically isolating him in the narrative setting during the remainder of the revelatory episode. The concern to explicitly isolate Daniel may relate to the ostensibly public setting of this episode, on the bank of the “great river,” whereas the other revelatory episodes are set indoors.⁶ Although there were previously other humans present where Daniel received this revelation, they are excised from the setting by the details mentioned in 10:7-8a. Therefore, narrative isolation shows Daniel to be the exclusive recipient of revealed eschatological mysteries.⁷

Dissemination Details

At the conclusion to his vision of the four beasts and the Son of Man (ch. 7), Daniel reports, “I kept the matter in my mind” (7:28).⁸ In some contexts, statements like this one indicate that something significant for the subsequent plot was remembered or pondered,⁹ which may be part of its significance here. In visionary

6. Episode 1 is a dream that comes to Daniel while he is in bed (7:1). In episode 2, Daniel sees himself in the Citadel of Susa by the Ulai Canal (8:2). But this seems to be a feature of his vision, and not the real setting for the vision. Episode 3 does not specify the setting, but since it occurs during the reign of Darius, it may allude back to 6:10, when Daniel’s private prayer in his house caused his encounter with the lions.

7. So also Collins, who says that these details demonstrate “Daniel’s privileged access to it [i.e., the vision]” (John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 374).

8. ומלתא בלבי נטרת ; καὶ τὸ ῥῆμα ἐν καρδίᾳ μου ἐστήριξα (OG); καὶ τὸ ῥῆμα ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου συνετήρησα (Th).

9. E.g., Dan 4:28 OG [4:25 MT]; Gen 37:11; Luke 2:51.

contexts, however, these types of statements primarily accentuate the concealment of some type of revelation within the seer himself. For example, after Levi's vision of seven men in white clothing, he reports, "When I awoke, I understood that this was like the first dream. And I hid this in my heart as well [καὶ ἔκρυψε καίγε τοῦτο ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου], and I did not report it to any human being on the earth" (*T. Levi* 8:18-19; cf. 6:2). Similarly, after Abraham sees a tree crying out in a human voice, the narrative reports, "Abraham saw the wonder and was astonished, and he picked up the stones secretly and hid the mystery, keeping it in his heart alone [μόνος ἔχων ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ]" (*T. Ab.* 3:12 [A]; cf. 3:4 [B]). Like these instances of internal concealment, Dan 7:28 indicates that Daniel concealed this vision and its interpretation within himself, and did not report it to others.¹⁰

In the angel's concluding comments to Daniel's vision of the ram and goat, Daniel is told to "seal up the vision [וְאָתָה סָתַם הַחִזְוִן ; καὶ νῦν πεφραγμένον τὸ ὄραμα (OG); καὶ σὺ σφράγισον τὴν ὄρασιν (Th)],"¹¹ since it concerns the distant future (8:26). Likewise, nearing the conclusion of the historical review, Daniel is told to "keep the words secret and the book sealed until the time of the end" (12:4).¹² Again in 12:9, the angel reiterates that "the words are to remain secret and sealed until the time of the end."¹³ As a direct result of Daniel's exclusive reception of revelation, the apocalypse includes details about Daniel's dissemination of eschatological mysteries to others.

Summary

The book of Daniel portrays Daniel as an exclusive recipient of revealed

10. Cf. also 2 *Bar.* 20:3; 50:1; 1Qap Gen^{ar} VI, 12.

11. Collins' translation, "keep secret the vision," correctly draws out the meaning of the injunction (*Ibid.*, 327–28).

12. סָתַם הַדְּבָרִים וְחָתַם הַסֵּפֶר ; κάλυψον τὰ προστάγματα καὶ σφράγισαι τὸ βιβλίον (OG); ἔμψραξον τοὺς λόγους καὶ σφράγισον τὸ βιβλίον (Th).

13. כִּי־סִתְּמִים וְחִתְּמִים הַדְּבָרִים ; ὅτι κατακεκαλυμμένα καὶ ἐσφραγισμένα τὰ προστάγματα (OG); ὅτι ἐμπεφραγμένοι καὶ ἐσφραγισμένοι οἱ λόγοι (Th).

mysteries. It does so in part through the features of narrative isolation and dissemination details. Although each of Daniel's revelatory episodes in chs. 7-12 envisages a private setting, narrative isolation appears only in the setting details of the final episode, which uniquely occurs in public space. Narrative isolation emphasizes that Daniel has exclusively received an historical review of events leading to the end, and so has exclusive insight into eschatological mysteries. Three of the four revelatory episodes in chs. 7-12 include dissemination details, which underscore Daniel's concealment of his exclusive revelations from other humans. The dissemination details draw a direct connection between Daniel and the terminal audience, who exclusively receive the written record of Daniel's revelations in the last days. Their reception of, and response to, Daniel's revelations establish their status as the eschatological 'wise',¹⁴ and bestow upon them the Danielic quality of understanding.¹⁵ As a result, these figures will apparently function as teachers in the last days, causing others to share in their understanding (cf. 11:33; 12:3). Finally, the portrayal of Daniel as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries in chs. 7-12 should not be separated from the polemic of chs. 1-6, which asserts that Daniel's exclusive revelatory insight, in contradistinction with the Babylonian mantics, is a direct result of Israel's God's exclusive ability to reveal mysteries, in contradistinction to all other deities.¹⁶

1 Enoch

Exclusionary Statements

Enoch's exclusive reception of revealed mysteries is based on his transcendence of normal human limitations via cosmic journey. Whether in a bodily

14. Cf. 11:33 (ומשכילי עם; οἱ συνετοὶ τοῦ λαοῦ [Th]); 11:35 (ומן־המשכילים; ἀπὸ τῶν συνιέντων [Th]); 12:3 (המשכלים; οἱ συνιέντες [Th]).

15. Cf. 1:17 (ודניאל הבין בכל־חזון וחלמות); Δανιηλ συνῆκεν ἐν πάσῃ ὁράσει καὶ ἐνυπνίοις [Th]) to 12:10 (והמשכלים יבינו; οἱ νοήμονες συνήσουσιν [Th]); 2:20-23.

16. Cf. 1:18-20; 2:11, 21-22, 27-28; 4:7, 19-24; 5:7-9, 15; 5:16ff.

or spiritual state,¹⁷ Enoch travels to all parts of the cosmos and reads the heavenly tablets, on which the course of history and divine judgments are recorded (52:1-2). Beginning in 14:8, Enoch recounts his ascent to heaven and tour of the cosmos. The journey pauses at “the (ultimate) end of heaven and earth” (18:14).¹⁸ After Uriel, his angelic tour guide, explains this place, Enoch narrates, “I, Enoch, alone [μόνος] saw the visions, the extremities of all things [τὰ πέρατα πάντων]. And no one among humans [οὐδὲ εἷς ἀνθρώπων] has seen as I saw” (19:3).¹⁹ This exclusionary statement emphasizes the extraordinary nature of Enoch’s experience, which was enabled by his unprecedented transcendence of the normal human limitations.²⁰ Simply by going where humans cannot, and therefore observing what they cannot, Enoch has exclusively observed mysteries of the cosmos.

The same point is made in 93:11-14, though not as explicitly. This passage asks a series of rhetorical questions, which are somewhat similar to those posed to Job in Job 38-41.²¹ Each of these questions seems to stress the normal boundaries

17. At points in *1 Enoch*, it is extremely difficult to discern whether his journeys are presented as something he bodily experiences, or something that he experiences in a spiritual mode. Perhaps this reflects the same confusion that Paul expresses about the mode of his own cosmic journey in 2 Cor 12:2-3.

18. There may be two separate cosmic journeys recounted in 14:8-16:3 and 17:1-36:4, respectively.

19. The “extremities of all things” here refers to a spatial location or limit, and not to a temporal, eschatological destination (Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 289).

20. So Kelley Coblenz Bautch, *A Study of the Geography of 1 Enoch 17–19: “No One Has Seen What I Have Seen”* (JSJSup 81; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003), 153–54. Based on the similarity between 19:3 and Dan 10:7, Bautch entertains the possibility that both are expressions of a “stereotyped formula.” This study will increase the likelihood of Bautch’s suspicions by highlighting further parallels in other apocalypses, and by situating this data in the context of an overall portrayal of the seer as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries.

21. Although von Rad’s thesis that ‘apocalyptic’ developed from wisdom traditions (Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology, Vol. 2: The Theology of Israel’s Prophetic Traditions*, in *Old Testament Theology, Volumes 1 and 2* [Theologies des Alten Testaments: BD II; trans. D. M. G. Stalker; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2005], 301–8) has not persuaded most, the two certainly share many points of contact (various points of contact are noted in, e.g., Benjamin G. Wright III and Lawrence M. Willis, eds., *Conflicted Boundaries in Wisdom and Apocalypticism* [SBLSymS 35; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005]; Grant Macaskill, *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* [JSJSup 115; Leiden: Brill, 2007]; Himmelfarb, *Ascent*, 72–94). Specifically, Stone has observed the connection between wisdom literature and “lists” of revealed mysteries (Stone, “Lists”).

and limitations that exist for humanity. For example, several of these questions ask whether there is any human who is able to understand the activities of heaven or know the measurements of heaven (93:12-14). It is likely, as Nickelsburg suggests, that these rhetorical questions imply “Enoch” as their answer.²² Therefore, these questions acknowledge the normal limitations imposed upon humanity, but within the context of *1 Enoch*, they highlight Enoch’s exceptional transcendence of such limitations. The questions in 93:11-14 are a more implicit expression of what is clearly articulated in 19:3—that “no one among humans has seen as I saw.”²³

Narrative Isolation

A reworked form of Gen 5:24—“Enoch walked with God; then he was no more [וַאֲיִנוּ], because God took him”—introduces Enoch’s interaction with the watchers, and his reception of revelation: “Enoch was taken; and none of the sons of men knew where he had been taken, or where he was, or what had happened to him. And his works were with the watchers, and with the holy ones were his days” (12:1-2). Genesis 5:24 emphasizes that Enoch did not die, as did the other humans from Adam to Noah. However, the version of it in *1 Enoch* performs a somewhat different function, since it does not introduce Enoch’s final departure from earth, but the beginning of his revelatory experiences (cf. 81:6). It signals a new mode of existence for Enoch, which involved interaction with the watchers and separation from other humans.

Enoch spends at least part of this time with the watchers on the *earthly plane*.²⁴ He is situated on the earthly plane when he intercedes for the fallen

22. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 452. This is probably picked up and made explicit in *2 En.* 40:1-3 [J]. Bautch’s suggestion that 93:11-14 challenges Enoch’s ability as a seer is extremely unlikely (Bautch, *Geography*, 15 n. 12).

23. Moreover, in addition to Enoch’s exposure to cosmological mysteries, his transcendence of human limitations has allowed him to know eschatological mysteries, since he has “read the tablets of heaven and...seen the writing of what must be...” (103:2). See also 81:1-2; 93:2; 103:2; 106:19; 108:6-7.

24. As Nickelsburg notes, there is a horizontal dimension of the cosmic dualism in *1 Enoch*

watchers: “And I went and sat by the waters of Dan in the land of Dan, which is south of Hermon, to the west. I recited (to God) the memorandum of their petition until I fell asleep” (13:7). He then has visions in which he experiences a cosmic journey.²⁵ When the visions conclude, Enoch is still on the earthly plane where the fallen watchers reside: “And when I had awakened, I went to them. And all of them were assembled together, and they were sitting and weeping at Abel-Main, which is between Lebanon and Senir, covering their faces” (13:9). That Enoch was on the earthly plane during portions of his time with the watchers may explain why 12:1-2 so strongly emphasizes that no other humans knew where he was. His experiences and revelations are shown to be exclusively his since “none of the sons of men knew where he had been taken, or where he was, or what had happened to him” (12:1). In the present arrangement of *I Enoch*, his isolation from other humans seems to persist until 81:5-10 (with the exception of his interaction with Noah, in the interpolated chs. 65-69:25), when he returns to his house for a year in order to transmit the contents of his revelations to his sons.²⁶ In sum, the setting details that introduce Enoch’s revelatory episodes establish his isolation from other humans during the time of his cosmic journeys, thereby emphasizing that the experiences and revelations were exclusively granted to him.²⁷

Dissemination Details

Unlike the book of Daniel, which does not describe the means through which Daniel’s revelations were delivered to the terminal audience, the corpus of *I Enoch* constructs a chain of transmission from Enoch, through his descendents, to the

(Nickelsburg, *I Enoch*, 40).

25. 13:8 reports his visions in a summary fashion. They are then described in detail in 14:8ff.

26. Nickelsburg makes a strong case that 81:1-82:4c represents the continuation of chs. 1-36 (Ibid., 335–37). Thus, 81:5-10 represents the termination of the period which began in 12:1-2, when Enoch was separated from other humans.

27. Perhaps another example of narrative isolation in the Enochic corpus occurs when Methuselah receives a secret explanation of Noah’s significance from Enoch (107:3).

terminal audience. This is probably an effect of the preflood setting of Enoch's revelations, which necessitates (for the real audience) some explanation of how the revelations survived the flood. When Enoch's seven angelic tour guides return him to his house (and to a normal state of human existence), they commission him to transmit the contents of his revelations to his children, especially Methuselah, for a period of one year (81:5-9). This creates a testamentary scenario in which Enoch delivers the records of his revelations to his posterity: "And now, my son Methuselah, [a]ll these things I recount and write for you, and all of them I have revealed to you, and I have given you books about all these things. Keep, my son Methuselah, the books of the hand of your father, that you may give them to the generations of eternity" (82:1).²⁸ It is exclusively through Noah, one of Enoch's descendents, that Enoch's books survive the flood (cf. 68:1). This chain of transmission finally delivers Enoch's books to the righteous in the last days: "And again I know a second mystery, that to the righteous and pious and wise my books will be given for the joy of righteousness and much wisdom" (104:12; cf. 1:1-2; 37:2-3).²⁹ Therefore, Enoch's written record of his revelations is delivered to his family, survives the flood through Noah,³⁰ and then is secretly preserved until being delivered to the righteous and wise in the last days. Like the 'wise' terminal audience envisaged in the book of Daniel,³¹ wisdom is a key characteristic of the terminal audience envisaged in *1 Enoch*. Moreover, Enoch's terminal audience will instruct others, apparently in the mysteries and wisdom of Enoch's books (104:12-105:1), which matches the task of Daniel's terminal audience in the last days.

Summary

In the corpus of *1 Enoch*, the features of exclusionary statements, narrative

28. The testamentary scenario is supported by the constant refrain of address to Methuselah, scattered throughout *1 Enoch* (76:14; 79:1; 83:1, 10; 85:1-2; 91:1-2, 18; 93:1-2; 94:1).

29. Enoch's books are contrasted with books leading to wickedness (104:10).

30. *Jub.* 7:37-39 describes this chain of transmission in detail.

isolation, and dissemination details support the portrayal of Enoch as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries. Through experiences not granted to other humans, Enoch alone receives a disclosure of cosmic and eschatological mysteries, as emphasized by the exclusionary statement of 19:3 and the rhetorical questions in 93:11-14. Narrative isolation occurs in the setting details of 12:1-2, which highlight that Enoch was separated from other humans during his revelatory episodes and interaction with the watchers. The dissemination details construct a chain of transmission, which preserves Enoch's books through the flood, finally delivering them to the 'wise' terminal audience in the last days. The portrayal of Enoch as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries is related to a polemic against the fallen watchers, who represent the source of illicitly revealed mysteries that explain the wicked practices of humanity.³² In contrast with the fallen watchers, who do not have knowledge of the eschatological mysteries that were revealed to Enoch (16:3), Enoch's exclusive revelations disclose wisdom and righteousness to the terminal audience.

Jubilees

Dissemination Details

The book of *Jubilees* claims to be an additional written record of revelation given to Moses during the forty-day period that he was on Sinai (cf. Exod 24:18) concerning "what (was) in the beginning and what will occur (in the future), the account of the division of all of the days of the Law and the testimony" (*Jub.* 1:4; cf. 1:26; 23:32).³³ The details about Moses' dissemination of this revelation are very vague, in contrast with the specificity of most other apocalypses. Moses is simply

31. Cf. Dan 11:33, 35; 12:3, 10.

32. Cf. 8:1-4; 9:6; 64:2; 65:6-8, 11; 69:1-15; cf. *Apoc. Ab.* 14:3-7.

33. Some of the impetus for this text may come from Deut 29:29, which distinguishes between the revealed Law and the secret things, concealed as the possession of God. The tradition that God gave Moses additional revelation of eschatological mysteries while he was on Sinai appears in 4 *Ezra* 14:4-6; 2 *Bar.* 59:4-11.

told to proclaim various matters to Israel (2:29-30; 6:32, 38; 30:11, 21; 33:13; 41:26; 49:15, 22), and to record the words of the angel of the presence as a testimony (1:5; 23:32; 33:18; 50:13). The absence of more specific details suggests that the dissemination envisaged in *Jubilees* is similar to what is described in the Pentateuch with reference to Moses' written revelation. Thus, the revelation would be proclaimed to the people and then deposited in the ark, remaining under the supervision of the Levites.³⁴ Additionally, in light of the references to other esoteric texts (cf. 10:12-14; 12:25-27; 32:25-26), it is likely that *Jubilees* was meant to be similarly received as Moses' exclusive revelations, which were secretly transmitted to the terminal audience, apart from Israel's public Scriptures.³⁵

Summary

Of the features that we are concerned with in this chapter, only dissemination details appear *Jubilees*, loosely supporting the portrayal of Moses as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries. In contrast with what is found in the book of Daniel and *1 Enoch*, the dissemination details in *Jubilees* are not very specific, neither describing how Moses concealed the revelations nor how he transmitted them to others. This likely represents the author's reliance upon the information found in the Pentateuch concerning how Moses disseminated his written revelation more generally. Moreover, on account of the high degree of exclusivity that was already inherent in the Mosaic pseudonym (cf. Num 12:6-8; Deut 34:10), it is not surprising that *Jubilees* does not contain exclusionary statements. It is notable that narrative isolation, though not a feature of *Jubilees*, does appear in the setting details related to Moses' reception of revelation on Sinai in Exod 24:12, which, as we have noted, is

34. Cf. Exod 17:14; 24:4, 7, 12; 31:18; 32:15-16; 34:1, 27-32; 40:20; Num 33:2; Deut 31:9, 19, 22, 24-26.

35. Cf. *T. Mos.* 1:16-18; 10:11.

the same setting for the revelations recorded in *Jubilees*.³⁶ Therefore, Moses' status as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries is primarily supported by authoritative tradition rather than specific features of the text itself.

Testament of Levi

Dissemination Details

Levi describes two revelatory episodes, both of which include dissemination details at their conclusions. After awaking from his cosmic journey of chs. 2-5, Levi says, “And I guarded these words in my heart [καὶ συνετήρουν τοὺς λόγους τούτους ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου]” (6:2). In other words, during his interactions with his father and Reuben, which the narrative recounts in the immediately following context (6:3), Levi did not disclose what had been revealed to him. Again, following the second vision, and just before his interaction with Jacob and Isaac (9:1), Levi reports, “And I hid this in my heart as well, and I did not report it to any human being on earth [καὶ ἔκρυψε καίγε τοῦτο ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου, καὶ οὐκ ἀνήγγειλα αὐτὸ παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς]” (8:19). These dissemination details indicate that, prior to Levi's testament to his posterity, which is the basic scenario of the text, he concealed the revelations that were exclusively granted to him concerning the priesthood.

Summary

As a result of Levi's exclusive reception of revealed mysteries, the text includes details related to the dissemination of his revelations to other humans. Like Daniel's vision of the four beasts and the Son of Man (cf. Dan 7:28), both of Levi's revelatory episodes conclude with a terse statement that he concealed the revelation from other humans. In view of the testamentary scenario in which Levi recites his

36. “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship at a distance. Moses alone [לְמֹשֶׁה ; μόνος] shall come near the LORD; but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him” (Exod 24:1-2). Cf. Exod 19:12-13, 20-24; 34:2-3.

revelatory episodes, these dissemination details indicate that he only disclosed his revelations to his posterity just before death (cf. 1:2; 19:4-5). The implication of the larger collection of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* is that the testaments were preserved in a secret chain of transmission, and carried up from Egypt, perhaps along with the patriarchs' bones (*T. Benj.* 12:3-4). Moreover, this same chain of transmission is also apparently credited with preserving the books of Enoch as well, which are referenced throughout.³⁷

2 Enoch

Exclusionary Statements

After Enoch's cosmic journey through the seven heavens (chs. 3-37), he describes his revelations to his posterity. In doing so, Enoch acknowledges that he has received an exclusive disclosure of what remains hidden from both humans and angels:

Now therefore, my children, I know everything; some from the lips of the LORD, others my eyes have seen from the beginning even to the end, and from the end to the recommencement. I, I know everything, and I have written down in books the extremities of the heavens and their contents. I, I have measured their movements and I know their armies. I have fully counted the stars, a great multitude innumerable. What human being can conceive the circuits of their changes or their movements or their returns or their guides or the guided ones? The angels themselves do not know even their numbers. But I, I have written down their names (40:1-3 [A]).³⁸

As in *1 Enoch*, Enoch's exclusive knowledge of these cosmic and eschatological mysteries is primarily based upon his transcendence of normal human limitations via cosmic journey. However, *2 Enoch* goes further than *1 Enoch* in asserting Enoch's exclusive exposure to revealed mysteries by claiming for Enoch a knowledge of cosmological mysteries that the angels do not even possess: "And not even to my angels have I explained my secrets, nor related to them their composition, nor my endless and inconceivable creation which I conceived, as I am making them known

37. Cf. *T. Sim.* 5:4; *T. Levi* 10:5; 14:1; *T. Jud.* 18:1; *T. Dan* 5:6; *T. Naph.* 4:1; *T. Benj.* 9:1.

38. Cf. *1 En.* 93:11-14.

to you today” (24:3 [A]). These exclusionary statements emphasize that Enoch is an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries, both among humans and angels.

Narrative Isolation

Enoch’s angelic tour guides appear to him while he is sleeping in order to tell him about his impending cosmic journey, and to instruct him regarding what he should do to prepare for it (ch. 1). The text, by way of Enoch’s first-person narration, details the setting in which the angels appeared to him, which includes the typical introductory information concerning the date, his location, and his physical and emotional condition (1:2-3). Although dream-visions and epiphanies often presuppose a private, indoor setting, the text makes this explicit. Enoch reports, “I was in my house alone” (1:2 [A]). This report of Enoch’s isolation effectively restricts the disclosure of the epiphany to Enoch.³⁹

Dissemination Details

At the conclusion of his cosmic journey, God commissions Enoch to transmit the written record of his revelations to his children (33:5-8; 36:1; cf. 23:3-6; 47:2 [see esp. recension J]; 48:6). The text envisages two stages in the transmission of Enoch’s revelations: first, they are to be widely distributed to all before the flood (54:1 [J]; 33:9; 48:8); second, they are divinely preserved through the flood and secretly transmitted to the terminal audience (33:10-12). In the last generation, God will cause Enoch’s books (and those of his fathers) to be revealed by divine agency: “Then at the conclusion of that generation the books in your handwriting will be revealed, and those of your fathers, by means of which the guardians of the earth will

39. During the epiphany the angels give him instructions concerning his impending cosmic journey: “And of your house let no one search for you until the LORD returns you to them” (1:9 [A]). Therefore, Enoch indeed commands his children that “no one must search for me until the LORD returns me to you” (2:4 [A]). Perhaps these injunctions reflect a concern to explicitly exclude all other humans from contact with Enoch during his revelatory episode, as they do in some other apocalypses (cf. 4 *Ezra* 5:19; 12:49; 14:23, 36; 2 *Bar.* 20:5; 32:7).

show themselves to the faithful men. And they will be recounted to that generation, and they will be glorified in the end more than at the first” (35:2-3 [A]).⁴⁰ Since the flood is analogous to the eschatological judgment in the Enochic literature, it is likely that the wide publication of Enoch’s revelations before the flood foreshadows their wide disclosure in the last generation. Yet, after the flood, Enoch’s books are apparently preserved only by divine agency, and thus remain secret until they are revealed in the last generation. This divine preservation of Enoch’s books diverges from the clearly delineated chain of transmission in *1 Enoch*.

Summary

All three features are deployed to support the portrayal of Enoch as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries. Exclusionary statements emphasize that Enoch has exclusively received revelation that is concealed from other humans and from angels.⁴¹ Narrative isolation appears in the settings details of 1:2, which highlight Enoch’s isolation during the introductory epiphany, restricting the revelatory experience to him alone. The details about Enoch’s dissemination of his writings envisage two phases: first, Enoch transmits his books to his sons, who publish them widely before the flood; then after the flood, they are secretly preserved by divine agency for the terminal audience, to whom they will be revealed.

4 Ezra

Exclusionary Statements

At several points in the apocalypse, Uriel, the angelic mediator, utters exclusionary statements which emphasize Ezra’s status as an exclusive recipient of

40. Andersen suspects that the “guardians” likely refer to the angels charged with preserving the preflood books (cf. 33:10-12; Andersen, “Second Enoch,” 159 n. f; the longer recension J points to a human figure [perhaps Melchizedek? 71:28-29]).

41. However, in *2 Enoch* there is not the same polemical contrast of Enoch with the fallen watchers, as there is in *1 Enoch*. Rather, Enoch simply receives disclosure of information that not even the angels know.

eschatological mysteries. For example, Uriel reveals to Ezra the fates of the righteous and wicked, and then tells him, “to you alone have I shown these things” (7:44).

Again, after explaining the eagle vision, Uriel tells Ezra, “The eagle which you saw coming up from the sea is the fourth kingdom which appeared in a vision to your brother Daniel. But it was not explained to him as I now explain or have explained to you” (12:11-12).⁴² He continues, “you alone were worthy to learn this secret of the Most High” (12:36). Once more, at the conclusion to the vision of the man from the sea, Uriel tells Ezra, “And you alone have been enlightened about this...” (13:53).

However, these stark exclusionary statements must be understood in the context of passages that place Ezra among a wider group of seers, to whom God has also revealed eschatological mysteries. In 8:62, Uriel says, “I have not shown this to all men, but only to you and a few like you.” Similarly, at the conclusion to the vision of the woman and the heavenly temple, Uriel tells Ezra, “you are more blessed than many, and you have been called before the Most High, as but few have been” (10:57). By acknowledging “a few” others who are like Ezra, the author is not attempting to diminish Ezra’s exclusive status; rather, these statements strengthen it by placing him among the likes of Abraham, Moses, and Daniel—figures whom the text overtly recognizes as recipients of eschatological mysteries.⁴³ This also comports with the apocalypse’s aim to authorize a corpus of seventy esoteric books, which stand alongside the twenty-four books of the Hebrew canon.⁴⁴

42. This is similar to Daniel’s more detailed revelatory disclosure concerning Jeremiah’s prophecy of seventy years (cf. Dan 9:2, 24).

43. Cf. 3:14; 12:11; 14:5.

44. In ch. 14, God commissions Ezra to produce ninety-four books along with the help of five scribes (14:24). Ezra is told to publicly disclose twenty-four books (14:45), but seventy are only intended for “the wise among your people” (14:46). Commentators are in agreement that the twenty-four refer to the books of the Hebrew canon (for the division of these books into the number twenty-four see, Bruce M. Metzger, “Fourth Ezra,” 555 fn. n), and that the remaining seventy are esoteric or apocalyptic books. This leads Box to conclude that the redactor’s purpose in creating the present form of *4 Ezra* was “to commend the apocalyptic literature to certain Rabbinical circles which were hostile, and secure for it a permanent place within orthodox Judaism” (Box, “4 Ezra,” 542).

Overall, the exclusionary statements in *4 Ezra* strongly emphasize Ezra's status as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries. They do so, in part, by placing him alongside the ranks of Judaism's most venerable figures. Additionally, when Ezra produces ninety-four books by divine inspiration, he is shown to be the source of Judaism's entire corpus of written revelation.

Narrative Isolation

Across the seven-fold structure of *4 Ezra*, there are eight revelatory episodes,⁴⁵ which are organized by a narrative framework:

Episode 1: dialogue with Uriel (3:1-5:15)

Narrative interlude: dialogue with Phaltiel (5:16-19)

Episode 2: dialogue with Uriel (5:20-6:34)

Episode 3: dialogue with Uriel (6:35-9:25)

Episode 4: vision of a woman (9:26-10:59)

Episode 5: vision of an eagle (11:1-12:39)

Narrative interlude: dialogue with the people (12:40-50)

Episode 6: vision of a man from the sea (12:51-13:58)

Episode 7: God speaks to Ezra (14:1-26)

Narrative interlude: Ezra instructs the people (14:27-36)

Episode 8: Ezra is inspired to produce Scripture (14:37-48)

The setting details included in the narrative framework of the apocalypse repeatedly isolate Ezra from other people during each of the eight revelatory episodes.

The introduction to episode 1 does not explicitly highlight that Ezra is isolated from other humans, but this is certainly implied by the information in 3:1 that he was *laying on his bed* while contemplating the desolation of Jerusalem.⁴⁶ While on his bed, Ezra voices his concerns in prayer to God (3:3-36), which eventuates an encounter and dialogue with the angel Uriel (4:1-5:13). Ezra's isolation comes more clearly into view at the conclusion of episode 1, and in the narrative

45. That there are eight revelatory episodes in a seven-part structure is indeed confusing. Several scholars who affirm the seven-part structure divide the seventh unit into two parts. E.g., Wolfgang Harnisch, "Der Prophet als Widerpart und Zeuge der Offenbarung: Erwägungen zur Interdependenz von Form und Sache im IV Buch Esra," in *AMWNE* (ed. David Hellholm; Tübingen: Mohr, 1989), 493.

46. So also Stone, who views the bedroom setting as one of privacy (Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 28); cf. *2 En.* 1:2.

interlude which links it to episode 2. On the night after his dream-vision, Ezra is approached by Phaltiel, a leader of the people, who questions him about abandoning the people. Phaltiel asks, “Where have you been?...Or do you not know that Israel has been entrusted to you in the land of their exile? Rise therefore and eat some bread, so that you may not forsake us, like a shepherd who leaves his flock in the power of savage wolves” (5:16-18).⁴⁷ Through Phaltiel’s questions, the narrative emphasizes that Ezra has been separated from the people during the preceding episode (i.e., episode 1). Furthermore, this narrative interlude establishes Ezra’s seclusion from the people during episode 2, since he banishes Phaltiel from his presence. Ezra narrates, “Then I said to him, ‘Depart from me and do not come near me for seven days, and then you may come to me’. He heard what I said and left me” (5:19).

With this, Ezra remains isolated from the people during the next four revelatory episodes (i.e., episodes 2-5). Episodes 2 and 3, like episode 1, involve a seven-day period of preparatory mourning and fasting (5:20; 6:35).⁴⁸ Apparently, like episode 1, they also occur while Ezra is within the city, presumably in his own house.⁴⁹ Episodes 2 and 3 are also structured similarly to episode 1: Ezra’s prayerful complaints lead to an encounter and dialogue with Uriel. However, both the setting and mode of revelation change in the five remaining revelatory episodes (i.e., episodes 4-8). Uriel commands Ezra to “go into a field of flowers where no house has been built” (9:24).⁵⁰ Rather than fasting, Ezra is to eat only the flowers of the

47. This concern over whether the people are being abandoned by their ‘prophetic light’ is a prevalent theme in both *4 Ezra* (cf. 5:16-18; 12:40-45; 14:20-22) and *2 Bar.* (32:8-33:3; 46:1-3; 77:12-17); cf. Mark 1:35-37.

48. The reference to the seven-day period of fasting that preceded the first revelatory episode has been lost in the redaction of *4 Ezra*, which resulted in the addition of chs. 1-2 (i.e., *5 Ezra*) to the original form of the apocalypse. For an explanation of this see, Knowles, “Unity of *4 Ezra*”; Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 35, 428.

49. So Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 28.

50. This change of location accomplishes three things. First, it creates an appropriate setting for the heavenly Jerusalem to be revealed to Ezra in episode 4 (cf. 9:24 to 10:51-54). Second, the change in Ezra’s location marks a transition in his disposition and outlook (so Earl Breech, “These

field during his seven days of preparation there. In episode 4, Ezra prays and sees a vision of woman, which Uriel explains is the heavenly Jerusalem. Ezra remains in the field for episode 5, receiving the eagle vision. In sum, Ezra's isolation, which was constructed by his dialogue with Phaltiel between episodes 1 and 2, has persisted uninterrupted to this point, despite his change in location.

After episode 5, while Ezra is still in the field, the people track him down, once again out of fear that he has abandoned them. Ezra narrates,

When all the people heard that the seven days were past and I had not returned to the city, they all gathered together, from the least to the greatest, and came to me and spoke to me, saying, "How have we offended you, and what harm have we done you, that you have forsaken us and sit in this place?" (12:40-41).

Ezra then ameliorates their concern by clarifying that he has not forsaken or permanently withdrawn from them, but that he has come to the field in order to solicit God's mercy for Jerusalem and the sanctuary there. Since Uriel has told Ezra to remain in the field awaiting further revelation, Ezra banishes the people from his presence, much like he dismissed Phaltiel before episode 2. He says, "'Now go, every one of you to his house, and after these days I will come to you'. So the people went into the city, as I told them to do. But I sat in the field seven days, as the angel had commanded me" (12:49-51a). Through Ezra's interaction with the people and their departure from his presence, this narrative interlude again establishes Ezra's isolation in the episodes that preceded the interaction (i.e., episodes 2-5), and in those that follow (i.e., episodes 6 and 7).

Episode 6, which recounts the vision of the man from the sea, is thus set in the same field as the earlier visions. After receiving the vision in seclusion, Ezra is told to wait in the field for three more days in order to receive more revelation

Fragments I Have Shored Against My Ruins: The Form and Function of 4 Ezra," *JBL* 92 [1973]: 267–74, who says that this transition signals the beginning of Ezra's consolation). Third, it establishes an outdoor setting in which Ezra could encounter God in the same manner as Moses (14:1-7).

(13:56). In episode 7, while still in the field, Ezra encounters God in the same way as Moses, and is told about his impending departure from normal existence (14:9). Out of concern for the people yet to be born, who have no Law or prophetic light, Ezra requests that he might receive inspiration in order to publish new written revelation. God agrees to this proposal, and gives Ezra instructions concerning how this massive task should be carried out. Additionally, God commands Ezra to “[g]o and gather the people, and tell them not to seek you for forty days” (14:23).⁵¹ At this point, there is a narrative interlude after episode 7, and Ezra returns from the field and gathers the people. After addressing them, Ezra commands, “But let no one seek me for forty days” (14:36). With this, he and five scribes depart for the field.⁵² The following day, they begin their forty-day production of Israel’s Scriptures and seventy esoteric books that were not to be made public. This is the eighth and final revelatory episode.

In summary, the narrative consistently isolates Ezra during the eight revelatory episodes recounted in *4 Ezra*.

Dissemination Details

At the conclusion to the eagle vision, Uriel instructs Ezra to conceal his written record of the revelations. They are to be delivered to the terminal audience through a secret chain of transmission, which is comprised of the ‘wise’, who are able to keep the revelations secret until they successfully reach their terminal audience: “And you alone were worthy to learn this secret of the Most High. Therefore write all these things that you have seen in a book, and put it in a hidden place; and you shall teach them to the wise among your people, whose hearts you know are able to comprehend and keep these secrets” (12:36-38; cf. 14:13).⁵³

51. Cf. 5:19; 12:49; 2 *Bar.* 20:5; 32:7; 2 *En.* 1:9b; 2:4.

52. The presence of these five scribes should not be viewed as somehow compromising Ezra’s isolation. Since the narrative makes it clear that God commanded Ezra to be assisted by them so as to efficiently produce books (14:24), it seems that these five men participate in Ezra’s isolation.

53. Cf. *T. Mos.* 1:16-18.

Similarly, when God commissions Ezra and the five scribes to produce the corpus of seventy esoteric books, God tells him that “some things you shall make public, and some you shall deliver in secret to the wise” (14:26; cf. 14:5-6). When he is finished writing, again God tells him to “keep the seventy that were written last, in order to give them to the wise among your people. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge” (14:46-47). The secret chain of transmission, which includes only the ‘wise’, has Ezra as its sole origin.

Summary

Perhaps no other apocalypse asserts its seer’s status as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries more forcefully and consistently than *4 Ezra*. Divine beings articulate exclusionary statements, which highlight that Ezra alone has received disclosure of certain mysteries. Narrative isolation appears in conjunction with each of the eight revelatory episodes. In contrast with the examples of narrative isolation identified in the other apocalypses covered thus far, the narrative isolation in *4 Ezra* does not consist of flat statements that the seer was alone (cf. Dan 10:7-8; *1 En.* 12:1-2; *2 En.* 1:2 [A]). Instead, narrative isolation in *4 Ezra* is constructed primarily through the movement of characters—Ezra away from the people, and the people away from Ezra. This seems to represent a rather sophisticated development of narrative isolation, exhibiting the great skill of the apocalypse’s author or editor. Finally, the details concerning Ezra’s dissemination of his exclusive revelations indicate that they were delivered in secret to the ‘wise’, who preserved their secrecy, delivering them to the terminal audience in the last days. Therefore, like the book of Daniel and *1 Enoch*, *4 Ezra* identifies those who receive and respond to esoteric revelation as the ‘wise’.

2 Baruch

Exclusionary Statements

After receiving a disclosure of eschatological mysteries (cf. 14:1; 23:6), Baruch acknowledges his exclusive status: “Only you [i.e., God] know the length of the generations, and you do not reveal your secrets to many” (48:3). The degree of Baruch’s exclusivity is made apparent through the text’s explicit comparison of him with Moses, which is based on their mutual reception of eschatological mysteries. The angel Ramael tells Baruch that God “showed him [i.e., Moses] many warnings together with the ways of the Law and the end of time, as also to you...” (59:4).⁵⁴ Baruch, therefore, is shown to be on par with Moses as one of a few seers who have received exclusive disclosures of eschatological mysteries.⁵⁵

Narrative Isolation

As with *4 Ezra*, the seven-fold structure of *2 Baruch* includes eight revelatory episodes, which are organized by a narrative framework:

Episode 1: dialogue with God (1:1-5:4)

Narrative interlude: Baruch takes people to Kidron Valley (5:5-6:1)

Episode 2: journey over Jerusalem (6:2-8:3)

Narrative interlude: destruction of Jerusalem and mourning (8:4-9:2)

Episode 3: word of God comes to Baruch (10:1-3)

Narrative interlude: Jeremiah and people leave, Baruch laments (10:4-12:5)

Episode 4: dialogue with God (13:1-20:6)

Episode 5: dialogue with God (21:1-30:5)

Narrative interlude: Baruch addresses the people (31:1-35:4)

Episode 6: vision of the forest (35:1-43:3)

Narrative interlude: Baruch addresses the people (44:1-47:2)

Episode 7: dialogue with God, vision of a cloud, dialogue with Ramael (48:1-76:5)

Narrative interlude: Baruch addresses the people (77:1-17)

Episode 8: Baruch writes letters (77:18-26)

The setting details provided by the narrative interludes establish Baruch’s isolation

54. Perhaps Adam and Abraham should be added to this group (cf. *2 Bar.* 4:3-5; 59:4-12; cf. also *4 Ezra* 4:13; 14:5).

55. Sayler also detects a typology between Baruch and Moses in the testamentary portions of the apocalypse, and concludes that “the relationship of Baruch to his successors is modelled after that of Moses to Joshua” (Sayler, *Have the Promises Failed?* 95–98).

during six of the eight revelatory episodes.

The narrative interlude between episodes 1 and 2 is the first place that explicitly isolates Baruch. During this narrative interlude, Baruch leads certain people from Jerusalem to the Kidron Valley in response to his previous revelation in episode 1 that the city would be destroyed. Once they are in the Kidron Valley, Baruch withdraws from the people before episode 2 begins. Baruch narrates, “And in the evening I, Baruch, left the people, went outside, and set myself by an oak” (6:1b). Here, secluded by the oak, Baruch is carried away on a divinely assisted journey over Jerusalem, which constitutes episode 2.⁵⁶ Following episode 2, there is another narrative interlude, which describes the destruction of Jerusalem and Baruch’s subsequent mourning in the company of Jeremiah. This provides the setting for episode 3, during which the God tells Baruch to dismiss Jeremiah to Babylon with the people. Following episode 3, there is another narrative interlude that recounts Jeremiah’s departure. Baruch narrates, “And I spoke to Jeremiah as the Lord commanded me. He, then, went away with the people, but I, Baruch, came back and sat in front of the doors of the Temple...” (10:4-5). The details provided in this narrative interlude isolate Baruch from the people, and even from his fellow prophet, Jeremiah.

Episode 4 involves a dialogue with God concerning eschatological matters. Towards the conclusion of the dialogue, God commands Baruch to “go away and sanctify yourself for seven days and do not eat bread and do not drink water and do not speak to anybody” (20:5). In order to carry out these preparatory duties, Baruch spends seven days in a cave in the Kidron Valley before returning to Zion for the next installment of revelation.⁵⁷ After this time of preparatory isolation, episode 5 commences, and Baruch engages in further dialogue with God about eschatological

56. Cf. Ezek 3:12, 14; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 40:2; 43:5.

57. Cf. Ezek 3:6.

matters. Following episode 5, there is another narrative interlude, and Baruch returns to the people in the Kidron Valley. After addressing them, he tells them, “‘And now, do not draw near to me for some days and do not call upon me until I shall come to you’. And it happened after having said all these words to them that I, Baruch, went my way” (32:7-8a).⁵⁸ When Baruch leaves, the people express their fear that he is permanently abandoning them (32:8b-33:3). Baruch reassures them that he is only separating from them for the purpose of receiving revelation in the holy of holies (34:1).⁵⁹ Therefore, this narrative interlude also highlights that Baruch is isolated from the people during episode 6.

Between episodes 6 and 7, there is yet another narrative interlude. Baruch narrates that he left the holy of holies, and summoned his son and the elders of the people, apprising them in a testamentary fashion that he would soon “go to [his] fathers in accordance with the way of the whole earth” (44:2). After instructing them and addressing their concerns about having no remaining prophet, Baruch again narrates that he separated from them: “And after I had left, having dismissed them, I returned from there and said to them: Behold, I go to Hebron, for to there the Mighty One has sent me” (47:1). With this, the narrative establishes Baruch’s isolation for episode 7, which includes dialogue with God, visions, and (for the first time in this apocalypse) an angelic mediator.

Between episodes 7 and 8, there is a final narrative interlude. Baruch returns to the people and assembles them all, in order to deliver his final instructions to them.⁶⁰ At the people’s request, Baruch agrees to write a letter of doctrine to the people in Babylon, which he will send by normal means. Additionally, he proposes to write to the nine-and-a-half tribes, but this he will send by means of a bird. His letter

58. Cf. 20:5; 4 *Ezra* 5:19; 12:49; 14:23, 36; 2 *En.* 1:9; 2:4.

59. Cf. 4 *Ezra* 12:48.

60. As Murphy insightfully observes, the audience whom Baruch addresses during these narrative interludes seems to become progressively broader (cf. 10:2; 31:1; 44:1; 77:1; Murphy, *Structure and Meaning*, 13).

writing stands as the eighth and final episode, and the preceding narrative interlude underscores that he is secluded from the people while he writes. Baruch narrates, “And it happened on the twenty-first day of the ninth month that I, Baruch, came and sat down under the oak in the shadow of the branches, and nobody was with me; I was alone” (77:18).⁶¹ Thus, Baruch produces the written record of his revelations while isolated from other people.

In summary, the narrative isolates Baruch during six of the eight revelatory episodes recounted in the apocalypse.⁶² By repeatedly isolating Baruch from other people when he receives revelation, the apocalypse shows him to be an exclusive recipient of the mysteries that were revealed to him in those settings.

Dissemination Details

Even though Baruch repeatedly addresses different groups of people after receiving revelation, he never transmits the contents of his revelations to them.⁶³ Indeed, God tells him to “remember everything which I commanded you and seal it in the interior of your mind” (20:3).⁶⁴ This is emphasized when Baruch addresses his son and a few others in a testamentary fashion. He does not tell them that God has revealed to him that he will be divinely removed from the earth, thereby avoiding death. Instead, he feigns that his death is impending (44:2; cf. 43:2; 48:30; 76:2), and in a narrative aside, he tells the reader, “But with regard to the word that I shall be taken up, I did not let it be known to them at that time, not even to my son” (46:7).

61. Cf. 4 *Ezra* 14:1.

62. Between episodes 2 and 3, Baruch mourns with Jeremiah over the destruction of Jerusalem, and so episode 3 occurs while Baruch is in some proximity to Jeremiah.

63. However, he does speak concerning the broad trajectories of God’s plan for the people (e.g., 31:5-32:6; 44:7-15).

64. Similarly, the angel Ramael tells Baruch to “write down in the memory of your heart all that you shall learn” (50:1), before revealing eschatological mysteries to him. This command should probably be interpreted as an injunction to conceal the revelations within himself instead of disclosing them to the people (cf. Dan 7:28; *T. Levi* 6:2; 8:18-19; *T. Ab.* 3:12).

The letter to the nine-and-a-half tribes (i.e., chs. 78-87), which was written in seclusion and sent by means of a bird (77:18-22; 87:1), is probably designed, in part, to explain to the audience how the apocalypse was secretly transmitted to them.

Although the text only specifies that Baruch wrote and sent the *letter* to the nine-and-a-half tribes, it is strongly implied that this letter was delivered to them along with the *apocalypse* (81:4; 85:8).⁶⁵ The very presence of the letter at the conclusion of the apocalypse suggests that this is the case. Therefore, Baruch's commands concerning the transmission of the letter should probably also be understood as referring to the transmission of the apocalypse (84:9; 86:1). Thus, Baruch's exclusive eschatological insight is preserved among a secret chain of transmission, which began with a bird and continued among the nine-and-a-half tribes until the surprising appearance of the apocalypse to the terminal audience.

Summary

Baruch is portrayed as an exclusive recipient of eschatological mysteries on par with Moses. This is highlighted by the exclusionary statements of 48:3 and 59:4. These exclusionary statements are similar to those identified in *4 Ezra*, since they acknowledge a wider group of venerable seers to whom similar mysteries have been disclosed. The narrative isolation in *2 Baruch* is also similar to that of *4 Ezra*. Setting details in the narrative interludes consistently establish Baruch's isolation during his revelatory episodes. As in *4 Ezra*, Baruch's isolation is usually highlighted by his movement away from other characters, or their movement away from him, thus

65. Although the letter became detached from the apocalypse in transmission, it was probably part of the original form of the apocalypse. Bogaert provides a detailed analysis of the manuscript data, concluding that all of the MSS that do not have chs. 78-87 attached are from one family, and that the MSS with these chs. attached are earlier (Pierre Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch: Introduction, Traduction Du Syriaque et Commentaire* [SC 144 ; Paris: Le Cerf, 1969], 67-72; he is followed by Murphy, *Structure and Meaning*, 28-29; contra Sayler, *Have the Promises Failed?* 98-101, whose arguments against viewing the letter as an original part of the apocalypse are not convincing). Whitters correctly observes that the apocalyptic visions of chs. 1-77 "significantly influence the nature of the letter" (Mark F. Whitters, "Testament and Canon in the *Letter of Second Baruch*," *JSP* 12, no. 2 [2001]: 149-63).

exhibiting a level of literary artistry similar to that of *4 Ezra*. However, unlike *4 Ezra*—but like the book of Daniel, *1 Enoch*, and *2 Enoch*—*2 Baruch* includes flat statements that Baruch was alone or by himself (6:1; 77:18). Finally, the dissemination details included in the apocalypse indicate that Baruch concealed his exclusive revelations from those to whom he speaks in the narrative interludes. The revelations were then sent by means of a bird and preserved for the terminal audience among the nine-and-a-half tribes.

Apocalypse of Abraham

Narrative Isolation

The main revelatory episode in this text (i.e., chs. 9-32) is an elaboration of Abraham's sacrifice in Gen 15:9-21. The *Apocalypse of Abraham* goes into considerably more detail than Genesis in constructing the setting for the sacrifice. In the Genesis narrative, Abraham merely procures the prescribed sacrifices, and then falls into a deep sleep after slaughtering them. However, in this apocalypse, Abraham first travels for forty days and nights to Horeb, accompanied by the angel Iaoel, before sacrificing: "And we went, the two of us alone together, forty days and nights" (12:1).⁶⁶ Once they arrive at the mountain, the sacrifices are divinely procured for Abraham. When Abraham slaughters the sacrifices, he then receives a disclosure of cosmological and eschatological mysteries (cf. 12:10; 24:2) via cosmic journey.⁶⁷ The setting details—that Abraham and Iaoel traveled alone to Horeb to make the sacrifice—effectively restrict the disclosure to Abraham.

66. Cf. 1 Kgs 19:8.

67. The tradition that Abraham received an exclusive disclosure of eschatological mysteries is similarly expressed in *4 Ezra* 3:14; *2 Bar.* 4:4; *L.A.B.* 23:6-7; Gen 15:12-17 in *Tg. Ps.-J.* See Bauckham, *Fate of the Dead*, 72–73 for further references in the rabbinic literature. See also the discussion in Christopher T. Begg, "Rereadings of the 'Animal Rite' of Genesis 15 in Early Jewish Narratives," *CBQ* 50, no. 1 (1988): 36–46.

Summary

Narrative isolation appears in the details leading up to Abraham's cosmic journey, underscoring that the revelatory episode occurred while he was isolated from all other humans. In this way, the apocalypse supports his portrayal as one who has exclusive insight into cosmological and eschatological mysteries. This example of narrative isolation is similar to that of *I En.* 12:1-2, in that both elaborate on an episode found in the Genesis narrative, and both isolate the seer during the period of time that he experiences cosmic journeys. Of the apocalypses surveyed thus far, the *Apocalypse of Abraham* is the only one that does not include any details about the dissemination of Abraham's revelations, nor does it refer to how the revelations were recorded. The apocalypse merely concludes with a statement that Abraham "accepted the words of God in his heart" (32:6).

Testament of Abraham

The *Testament of Abraham* includes a cosmic journey where Abraham learns about the fate of the wicked and righteous after death and other eschatological mysteries just before his own death. None of the three features with which we are concerned in this chapter appear in this text. There are only a couple of points where Abraham conceals some type of supernatural occurrence from other humans: Abraham sees a talking tree, but hides the mystery in his heart (ἐκρυψεν τὸ μυστήριον ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ [*T. Ab.* 3:4 {A}]); and when the angel's tears turn to stones, he again hides the mystery in his heart alone (ἐκρυψεν τὸ μυστήριον, μόνος ἔχων ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ [3:12 {A}]).⁶⁸ These examples of concealment do not relate to the content of the revelation delivered to him during his cosmic journey, and therefore do not seem to constitute dissemination details. Moreover, the text never indicates that Abraham wrote a copy of his revelations, nor does it portray him as

68. Cf. *T. Reu.* 1:4; *T. Sim.* 2:1; *T. Levi* 6:2; 8:19; *Apoc. Mos.* 3:3.

describing them to his posterity. Therefore, Abraham's status as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries remains tacit, asserted only through the reputation inherent in the pseudonym.⁶⁹

3 Baruch

Exclusionary Statements

As Baruch mourns the capture of Jerusalem, an angel appears to him, initiating a cosmic journey. If Baruch agrees to responsibly record what he sees, the angel says, "I will show you mysteries which no man has ever seen" (1:6 [S]).⁷⁰ This exclusionary statement highlights Baruch's exclusive insight into the cosmological mysteries that are revealed to him during his cosmic journey, when he transcends the normal limitations of humanity.⁷¹

Dissemination Details

Only the Slavonic recension includes details about Baruch's transmission of his revelations to others. At the conclusion of his cosmic journey, a voice from heaven says, "Bring Baruch down to the face of all the earth so that he will tell the sons of men that which he has seen and heard, and all the mysteries you have shown him" (17:1 [S]). This commissioning places no restrictions on whom Baruch should deliver his revelation to. The injunction to broadly disclose his knowledge of mysteries to humanity in general is somewhat similar to the dissemination details in 2 *Enoch*, that Enoch should not hide his books, but distribute them to all (2 *En.* 54:1 [J]; 33:9; 48:8).

69. Perhaps statements of divine favor for Abraham imply his exclusive status as well (e.g., in recension A—1:4-7; 2:3; 4:6; 15:14-15; 16:9; in recension B—4:10; 8:2).

70. This exclusionary statement appears only in the Slavonic version. The Greek version reads, "I will disclose to you other mysteries greater than these" (1:6 [G]). Since no mysteries have yet been disclosed to Baruch in the apocalypse, this statement is not intelligible. Therefore, the Slavonic version should be followed at this point.

71. In the Greek version, the threshold between the normal realm of humanity and the first heaven is "a river which no one is able to cross [ἣν ποταμὸς ὃν οὐδεὶς δύναται περᾶσαι αὐτόν]..." (2:1 [G]). This is very similar to the narrative isolation constructed in *Herm.* 1:3.

Summary

Baruch's status as an exclusive recipient of revealed cosmological mysteries is supported by an exclusionary statement and dissemination details in the Slavonic recension only. The exclusionary statement very forcefully asserts that Baruch has received insight into mysteries that all other humans have been excluded from. The dissemination details indicate that Baruch's exclusive revelations were widely disseminated. Among the apocalypses that we have surveyed thus far, only 2 *Enoch* envisages a wide dissemination of the seer's revelations immediately upon the conclusion of his revelatory episode. Yet, on account of the flood and the miraculous preservation of Enoch's books, this initial wide dissemination would not have militated against the terminal audience's perception of discovering a text that had long remained secret. However, it is unclear whether the terminal audience (i.e., the author's real audience) of 3 *Baruch* would have been convinced that the text was actually the revelations of Baruch, since its wide dissemination would not accord well with its surprising appearance. This is probably the reason that the Greek recension concludes not with a commission to disseminate the revelations, but with an exhortation to those "who happen upon these revelations" (17:4 [G]).

Revelation

Dissemination Details

In the introductory epiphany of the risen Jesus, John is told to send the written record of his revelations to the seven churches (1:11). Then, at the conclusion of the apocalypse, the familiar injunction to seal up the revelations is inverted: "And he said to me, 'Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near'" (22:10). Previously, however, John was prohibited from disclosing one feature of his revelations: "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down" (10:4). There is no obvious reason why this was not to be written in the apocalypse.

The closest analogy to this is found in *2 En.* 19:6, where Enoch mentions that an angelic song is not to be reported in his apocalypse, despite all of the other mysteries that it discloses. Perhaps the underlying premise of *Rev* 10:4 and *2 En.* 19:6 is that there are certain matters, exclusively disclosed to the seer, which are either too glorious or awful to be disseminated among humanity.⁷² Aside from 10:4, the other dissemination details envisage an immediate delivery of the apocalypse to the seven churches, on account of its immediate relevance.

Summary

As a result of John's exclusive reception of revealed eschatological mysteries on the island of Patmos, John is told to write his revelations and to send them to the seven churches, thereby making them widely available among Christians living in the last days. John is explicitly told not to conceal his revelations, which, at a minimum, indicates that concealing was understood to be the normal practice of apocalyptic seers. Since the reason given for not concealing the apocalypse is that the time is near, it is likely that an allusion to the injunctions given to Daniel is intended (*Dan* 8:26; 12:4, 9). The significance of this allusion would be to signal that the visions of Daniel accord with those given to John in their concurrent fulfillment.⁷³ Perhaps the absence of any exclusionary statements can be related to the fact that the apocalypse is not pseudonymous, which decreased the burden to assert that the revelations were exclusively disclosed to the seer, and so were not publicly known. The absence of any overt instance of narrative isolation may be an effect of John's exile on the island of Patmos, which already entailed a degree of isolation.

72. A similar premise underlies Hermas' inability to remember the awful aspects of what he heard (*Herm.* 3:3).

73. However, *2 En.* 54:1—"The books which I have given to you, do not hide them. To all who wish recite them, so that they may know about the extremely marvelous works of the LORD"—which does not seem to allude to the book of Daniel, warrants caution in concluding that *Rev* 22:10 does.

Shepherd of Hermas

Narrative Isolation

Across the five visions (chs. 1-25), twelve commandments (chs. 26-49), and ten parables (50-114),⁷⁴ there are fifteen main revelatory episodes:

- Episode 1:** spirit-enabled journey and encounter with woman (1:3-4:3)
- Episode 2:** spirit-enabled journey and encounter with woman (5:1-4)
- Episode 3:** meaning of written message revealed (6:1-7:4)
- Episode 4:** identity of woman revealed (8:1-3)
- Episode 5:** encounter with woman and vision of tower (9:1-18:2)
- Episode 6:** interpretation of three forms of the woman (18:3-21:4)
- Episode 7:** vision of beast (22:1-7)
- Episode 8:** encounter with the shepherd (25:1-50:11)
- Episode 9:** encounter with the shepherd (51:1-53:8)
- Episode 10:** encounter with the shepherd (54:1-60:4)
- Episode 11:** encounter with the shepherd (61:1-65:7)
- Episode 12:** encounter with the shepherd (66:1-69:8)
- Episode 13:** encounter with the shepherd (70:1-77:5)
- Episode 14:** encounter with the shepherd (78:1-110:3)
- Episode 15:** Hermas commissioned (111:1-114:4)

In comparison with the other apocalypses discussed in this section, the *Shepherd of Hermas* has a minimal narrative framework; the narrative introductions and conclusions to the revelatory episodes, when present, are very terse. Resultantly, the narrative does not provide much detail concerning Hermas' condition and location leading up to, and during, each revelatory episode, nor does the narrative provide much detail regarding Hermas' activities after each revelatory episode concludes.⁷⁵

However, there are a few places where the narrative details emphasize Hermas' isolation during a revelatory episode. Notably, the portions of the narrative that do so all occur in chs. 1-24. Holmes posits this to be the earliest portion of the text, and he suggests that it probably circulated independently for some time before being combined with chs. 25-114.⁷⁶ The first place that the narrative underscores

⁷⁴ Holmes also identifies an internal, two-part division in the text between chs. 1-24 and chs. 25-114 (Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 445).

⁷⁵ This minimal narrative framework may represent a transition towards the form of later apocalypses, which are almost entirely stripped of any narrative framework (e.g., *Viz. Ezra*; *Ques. Ezra*; *Apoc. Sedr.*; *Apoc. El.* [C]; *Apoc. Dan.*).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 445-47.

Hermas' isolation is in the introduction to episode 1:

Some time later, as I was going to Cumae and glorifying God's creatures for their greatness, splendor, and power, I fell asleep as I walked. And a spirit took me [καὶ πνεῦμά με ἔλαβεν] and carried me away through a pathless region through which a man could not make his way [δι' ἧς ἄνθρωπος οὐκ ἐδύνατο ὁδεῦσαι], for the place was precipitous and eroded by the waters (*Herm.* 1:3).⁷⁷

Thus, just before the heavens are opened to Hermas during his first revelatory episode (1:4), he is involved in a divinely assisted journey, which takes him to a place away from other humans.⁷⁸ Episode 2 occurs in the same setting as episode 1, and Hermas travels to this place again through divine assistance:

When I was on my way to Cumae, about the same time as the previous year, as I walked along I remembered the vision of the previous year, and again a spirit took me and carried me away to the same place as the year before (*Herm.* 5:1).

In these first two revelatory episodes, Hermas is isolated from other humans by means of a divinely assisted journey to a place that is otherwise inaccessible to humans. These journeys function to isolate Hermas during the revelatory episodes that follow, ensuring his exclusive participation in them.

In episode 5, Hermas is again isolated, though not as a result of a divinely assisted journey. The woman in his vision commands him to go to a field in order to receive further revelation (9:2):

I asked her saying: "Lady, to what part of the field?" "Wherever you wish," she replied. I selected a beautiful secluded spot... So I went, brothers and sisters, to the field, and I counted up the hours and went to the place where I had instructed her to come, and I saw an ivory couch... When I saw these things sitting there and no one in the area, I was astonished and a fit of trembling seized me and my hair stood on end and I shuddered in panic, as it were, because I was alone (*Herm.* 9:3-5).

Three times in this passage, the narrative underscores Hermas' isolation in the field:

77. Cf. *3 Bar.* 2:1 (G).

78. Although Hermas enters a trance-like state prior to this divinely assisted journey, the journey itself should be understood as a bodily journey, and not merely a spiritual journey (as in e.g., *Rev* 4:2; 17:3; 21:10; *Ascen. Isa.* 6:1-12). It is not like the cosmic journeys that some apocalyptic seers, such as Enoch, experience as they ascend through the heavens beyond the normal plane of humanity. Instead, it is a divinely assisted journey on the plane of normal humanity (cf. *2 Bar.* 6:3), but to a region that humans cannot access apart from divine assistance.

- 1) He selects a “secluded spot [ἐξελεξάμην τόπον καλὸν ἀνακεχωρηκότα]”;
- 2) He sees a couch in the field but there is “no one in the area [καὶ μηδένα ὄντα ἐν τῷ τόπῳ]”;
- 3) There is no normal explanation for the presence of the couch in the field since Hermas is “alone [μόνου μου ὄντος],” which makes him afraid.

There is a twofold significance of Hermas’ isolation in the field. First, there is no human who could have placed the couch in the field, which highlights that it is a feature of the revelation itself (cf. 9:7-10:2). Second, there were no other human witnesses to this revelatory episode, which reinforces Hermas’ exclusivity as the human recipient of this revelation.⁷⁹

The narrative introduction to episode 7 (22:4-7)—which is the final revelatory episode in what was probably the earliest form of the apocalypse—isolates Hermas before he hears a divine voice and sees the vision of a beast: “I was going into the country by the Campanian Way. The place is a little over a mile from the public road, and is easily reached. So, as I was walking by myself [μόνος οὖν περιπατῶν], I asked the Lord to complete the revelations and visions that he showed to me through his holy church...” (22:2-3). In contrast to the location of the first two revelatory episodes—a place which no man could access—this episode occurs in a place that is easily accessed. However, despite the accessibility of this place, the narrative specifies that it is “a little over a mile from the public road.” This detail is otherwise insignificant, except that it, along with the Hermas’ statement that he was walking by himself, underscores that he was isolated, despite the accessibility of the place. Here, as in episodes 1, 2, and 5, the rhetorical function of Hermas’ isolation is to assert his exclusivity as the sole human participant in this revelatory episode.

In chs. 1-24, there are three revelatory episodes that do not underscore Hermas’ exclusivity (episode 3 [6:2-7:4]; episode 4 [8:1-3]; episode 6 [18:6-21:4]). This may seem at first glance to suggest that Hermas’ isolation in the other four

79. The setting of episodes 1 and 2 seems to be a different one than in episode 6, since the former required divinely assisted travel and the latter does not.

episodes is merely haphazard. However, there is an essential difference between these episodes that do not explicitly isolate Hermas, and those that do: the episodes that explicitly isolate Hermas from other humans all occur outdoors, and those that do not seem to occur indoors. Episodes 4 and 6 are dreams or nighttime visions, presumably occurring while Hermas is sleeping in his house (cf. 8:1-2; 18:6-7). The setting of episode 3 is not specified, though the following context may imply that it also occurred in Hermas' house (cf. 8:1-2). Therefore, it is likely that Hermas' isolation in episodes 1, 2, 5, and 7 is not haphazard, but reflects a concern to consistently demonstrate that his outdoor (and so occurring in public space?) revelatory episodes were exclusively granted to Hermas among human beings.⁸⁰

In summary, only four of the fifteen revelatory episodes in the *Shepherd of Hermas* explicitly isolate Hermas from other humans. Notably, these all occur in chs. 1-24.

Dissemination Details

The revelations that are exclusively disclosed to Hermas are designed to be heard by everyone, so that all might repent (6:4; 16:10-11; 58:1; 112:1-2). Since Hermas is not able to remember his revelations (5:3),⁸¹ he writes them down in books (25:5, 7; 78:1-3; 110:1; 111:1), delivering one to Clement, who will then disseminate the book to the cities abroad, and one to Grapte, who will instruct the widows and orphans (8:2-3). Hermas is told, "you yourself will read it to this city, along with the elders who preside over the church" (8:3). Therefore, the dissemination details are fairly elaborate, describing how Hermas' revelations should be transmitted to those for whom they are relevant. Like the book of Revelation, Hermas does not take any measures to conceal his revelations on account of their immediate relevance and the fact that they are not pseudonymously attributed to an ancient figure.

80. Cf. Dan 10:7-8.

81. Cf. *Jub.* 32:25-26.

Summary

Despite the unflattering way in which the text portrays Hermas,⁸² the text still includes features which emphasize that the revelations were delivered to him exclusively. Narrative isolation appears in Hermas' comments about his separation from other people leading up to several revelatory episodes, underscoring his exclusive observation of what appears to him. These examples of narrative isolation occur in conjunction with outdoor revelatory episodes, as is often the case in other texts. The dissemination details specify that Hermas' revelations should be made available to everyone, and these details include specific names of individuals who are involved in the chain of transmission responsible for the wide publication of Hermas' visions.

Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah

Exclusionary Statements

Isaiah's revelatory episode consists of an ascent to the throne of God, during which he observes cosmological, eschatological, and christological mysteries. Unlike some of the seers in other apocalypses, Isaiah leaves his flesh behind during his ascent (cf. 7:5).⁸³ This is a result of the text's fundamental premise that fleshly humans do not belong in the heavens, which are "hidden from flesh" (6:15). The heavens are strictly the realm of divine beings and the righteous dead (who reside in the seventh heaven with God).⁸⁴ What makes Isaiah's experience remarkable, distinguishing it from the experience of any post-mortem righteous person (who would experience a similar ascent through the heavens after dying), is that Isaiah will return to his flesh after making this journey, thereby disclosing what he has observed: "I say to you, Isaiah, that no man who has to return into a body of that world has

82. This will be discussed in the following chapter.

83. The text says that "his mind was taken up from him" (6:10-11).

84. Hence the interrogation from an angel as Isaiah is permitted to enter the seventh heaven: "How far is he who dwells among aliens to go up?" (9:1).

come up, or seen, or understood what you have seen and what you are to see...” (8:11-12). Again, at the conclusion of this heavenly journey, the angelic mediator tells Isaiah, “you have observed what no one born of flesh has observed. And you shall return into your robe until your days are complete; then you shall come here” (11:34-35; cf. 9:1-2). These exclusionary statements highlight the uniqueness of Isaiah’s experience, thereby emphasizing that the revelation was granted exclusively to him among humans.

Narrative Isolation

Despite an extended historical review in 3:13-4:22, there is technically only one revelatory episode in the *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah*—Isaiah’s ascent through the seven heavens (6:10-11:35). The narrative introduction to this episode identifies all of the people present in the setting with Isaiah leading up to his ascent: Hezekiah, Isaiah’s son Josab, all the princes of Israel, the eunuchs, the king’s counselors, and forty prophets and sons of the prophets (6:3). Just before the ascent begins, Isaiah begins to speak with the Spirit, and the others present are able to hear their dialogue (6:6, 8, 10). This dialogue is then interrupted by Isaiah’s spiritual ascent:

And while he was speaking with the Holy Spirit in the hearing of them all, he became silent, and his mind was taken up from him, and he did not see the men who were standing before him. His eyes were indeed open, but his mouth was silent, and the mind in his body was taken up from him. But his breath was (still) in him, for he was seeing a vision...And the people who were standing by, apart from the circle of prophets, did [not] think that the holy Isaiah had been taken up (6:10-12, 14, brackets original).

The setting details provided in this passage isolate Isaiah from the others present in two ways. First, they describe the mode of Isaiah’s ascent: it was a non-bodily ascent, which is an effect of the text’s sharp distinction between heaven, “which is hidden from the flesh” (6:15; cf. 11:34-35), and earth, the realm to which flesh is confined. The details concerning the mode of Isaiah’s ascent have the effect of removing Isaiah

from the narrative setting and isolating his “mind” or spirit from the other people present. Therefore, even though others are physically present with Isaiah during this revelatory episode, he is spiritually isolated from them, receiving divine disclosure of what is concealed from humans in a normal state of physicality. Second, whereas Isaiah’s dialogue with the Holy Spirit prior to his spiritual ascent was heard by all who were present in this setting, when the spiritual ascent begins, Isaiah becomes silent. Therefore, the others do not overhear his discussions with divine beings that take place during his spiritual ascent—discussions concerning cosmological, eschatological, and christological mysteries.

The *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah* diverges from the other apocalypses in the way that the setting details isolate the seer. In most apocalypses, the setting details isolate the seer physically, separating him from other humans. However, Isaiah’s isolation here is accomplished through his spiritual separation from the other humans present in the setting, and his silence, which conceals the contents of his revelation from them. He is removed from the world of flesh and taken to the realm that is hidden from flesh in order to receive revelation. Yet, despite the text’s focus on Isaiah’s spiritual isolation during this revelatory episode, there remains an element of physical isolation in the narrative. Before Isaiah’s first-person presentation of his vision, the narrative reports,

[A]fter Isaiah had seen this vision he recounted it to Hezekiah, and to Josab his son, and to the other prophets who had come. But the officials, and the eunuchs, and the people did not hear, apart from Samnas the secretary, and Jehoiakim, and Asaph the recorder, for they (were) doers of righteousness, and the fragrance of the Spirit was in them; but the people did not hear, for Micah and Josab his son had sent them out when the wisdom of this world was taken from him as if he were dead (6:16-17).

In other words, all who were not prophets are sent away, and the only non-prophets permitted to remain (and so hear Isaiah secondarily disclose the contents of his revelation) are those who are explicitly identified as “doers of righteousness” and those having “the fragrance of the Spirit in them.” The implication is that these others

who were sent away did not meet these criteria. Although this passage is chiefly concerned with the secondary phase of disclosure, where Isaiah transmits the contents of his revelation to other humans, it constructs a certain degree of physical isolation for Isaiah during the primary phase of disclosure. Indeed, Micah and Josab had sent the people out when Isaiah's spirit was taken up from his body. Isaiah is thus physically isolated during this revelatory episode from those who were unqualified to be present, and he was spiritually isolated from all who were present. In this way, the narrative underscores Isaiah's exclusive reception of revealed mysteries.

Dissemination Details

The revelations, which were exclusively granted to Isaiah, were also restrictively transmitted from him to the terminal audience. As discussed above, those who are not prophets nor doers of righteousness are removed from the setting when Isaiah receives his revelations (6:17), and so they do not hear Isaiah's secondary disclosure of his revelations. The text is clear that Isaiah transmitted the account of his revelations only to Hezekiah, Josab his son, and the other prophets (6:16; 7:1; 8:24; 11:16a). At the conclusion, after Isaiah has secondarily disclosed his visions to this restricted group, the narrative reports, "And Isaiah made him [i.e., Hezekiah] swear that he would not tell this to the people of Israel, and that he would not allow any man to copy these words. And then [i.e., at the time of the end] they [i.e., the terminal audience] shall read them" (11:39; brackets mine).⁸⁵ Therefore, the dissemination details in the apocalypse clearly indicate that Isaiah's revelations were preserved among the group of prophets for the terminal audience who lives at the end.⁸⁶

85. The text exhibits some ambivalence about whether Hezekiah obeyed this injunction, since it says that he "gave all these things to Manasseh in the twenty-sixth year of his reign" (11:42). Nonetheless, the secrecy of the visions was maintained, since "Manasseh did not remember these things, nor place them in his heart, but became the servant of Satan and was destroyed" (11:43).

86. The text distinguishes between this secret record of Isaiah's revelations, and that which was published openly to Israel (4:20); this distinction between public and esoteric revelation is most

Summary

The angelic mediator utters several exclusionary statements which highlight Isaiah's status as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries. This is due to the fact that he has traveled to the realm that is hidden from flesh, observed its mysteries, and then returned to his flesh. The narrative isolates Isaiah's spirit during the revelatory episode, and the setting details also isolate him physically from those who were neither prophets nor doers of righteousness. Moreover, the dissemination details clarify that Isaiah's revelations were to remain concealed within a secret chain of transmission, which would deliver them to the terminal audience at the time of the end.

Apocalypse of Zephaniah

None of the features with which we are concerned appear in this text. It is important to note, however, that the beginning and conclusion of the apocalypse have been lost. Often, exclusionary statements, narrative isolation, and dissemination details appear in the introduction and conclusion of a revelatory episode (or apocalypse). Therefore, the complete, non-extant, version of the apocalypse may have contained one or more of these features, but they are not present in the extant manuscripts.

Conclusions

The above analysis has demonstrated that there are a few regularly occurring features of the apocalypses which support the generic portrayal of the seer as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries.

1. Perhaps most clearly, *exclusionary statements* emphasize that the mysteries have been revealed only to the seer, or that the seer is one of just a few figures to whom

clearly made in 4 *Ezra* 14:6, 26, 45-48.

the mysteries have been disclosed. This feature appears in six of the fourteen apocalypses in our data sample (*1 En.*, *2 En.*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Bar.*, *3 Bar.*, *Mart. Ascen. Isa.*).

- In four of these six apocalypses (*1 En.*, *2 En.*, *3 Bar.*, *Mart. Ascen. Isa.*), the primary mode of revelation is a cosmic journey, and the exclusionary statements are very closely linked with the seer's transcendence of normal human limitations and experience.
- In two of the six apocalypses (*4 Ezra*, *2 Bar.*), the primary modes of revelation are dialogue with divine beings and symbolic visions along with their interpretations. Uniquely in these two apocalypses, the exclusionary statements acknowledge that the seer is one of a few figures to whom such eschatological mysteries have been disclosed. This is the inevitable effect of an accumulating body of apocalypses towards the end of the first century C.E. By placing their seers among the ranks of other venerable seers, the exclusionary statements in these two apocalypses actually bolster the status of their seers.
- Only in the Enochic apocalypses are the exclusionary statements uttered by the seer himself; in the other four apocalypses the angelic mediator of revelation utters the exclusionary statement with reference to the seer.

2. *Narrative isolation* appears in eight of the fourteen apocalypses (*Dan.*, *1 En.*, *2 En.*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Bar.*, *Apoc. Ab.*, *Herm.*, *Mart. Ascen. Isa.*) and almost always occurs in conjunction with revelatory episodes that take place in an outdoor setting. The only exception is in *2 Enoch*, where Enoch specifies that he was alone during the epiphany that was set in his house.

- Usually, narrative isolation is established through the seer's mention that he was alone, apart from other humans, just before a revelatory episode begins. However, some of the apocalypses establish the narrative isolation of the seer through details regarding the movement of characters in and out of the setting in which the seer receives revelation. For example, *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* both include extensive information regarding the movement of the seer away from other characters and vice versa. The repeated deployment of narrative isolation in these two apocalypses is an effect of their episodal nature—i.e., the seer receives his revelations in several installments, many of which are separated by periods of interaction with other characters.
- These same two apocalypses, *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, portray their seers as Mosaic-type figures. They receive insight into the mysteries that Moses had, they represent the prophetic light in Israel, and they publish Scripture. Therefore, it is likely that the narrative isolation in these two apocalypses draws from the Exodus narrative. For example, in Exodus 24, God instructs Moses to approach the top of Mount Sinai in order to receive the stone tablets containing the law and commands for Israel: “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship at a distance. Moses alone [לְבַדּוֹ ; μόνος] shall come near to the LORD; but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him” (Exod 24:1-2). Moses, therefore, is isolated with God during the revelatory episode on the top of Sinai. Moreover, after he has separated from the people, Moses spends seven days alone on the mountain before God speaks with him (24:16).⁸⁷ This also has obvious

87. The Exodus narrative does not explicitly say that Moses fasted during this time, but this is certainly implied. It is made explicit in Deut 9:9.

parallels with *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, where revelatory episodes are preceded by seven-day periods of fasting. The Exodus narrative once again emphasizes Moses' isolation from the people when he receives the second publication of the tablets after the golden calf incident. God instructs him, "[C]ome up in the morning to Mount Sinai and present yourself there to me, on the top of the mountain. No one shall come up with you, and do not let anyone be seen throughout all the mountain..." (Exod 34:2-3). The narrative isolation associated with Moses' reception of revelation on Sinai probably provided some of the impetus for the appearance of this feature in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*.

- None of the other six apocalypses portray their seers as Mosaic-type figures, and there is no evidence to suggest that the Exodus narrative was the impetus for their deployment of narrative isolation. The only other example of narrative isolation in the Hebrew Bible (outside of the book of Daniel) is in Genesis, when Jacob wrestles with some sort of divine manifestation. After sending everyone else across the river, Jacob is alone when this divine encounter begins: "Jacob was left alone [וַיִּוְתֶר יַעֲקֹב לְבַדּוֹ ; ὑπελείφθη δὲ Ἰακώβ μόνος]; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak" (Gen 32:24 [v. 25 MT/LXX]). Perhaps the narrative presentations of Jacob's encounter in Genesis and Moses' reception of revelation in Exodus—formative revelatory moments for Israel—contributed to the establishment of narrative isolation as a regular feature in the apocalypse genre. Yet, it seems best to conclude that narrative isolation in the apocalypses was primarily designed to construct and preserve a seer's exclusive access to revelatory content without any intertextual significance (aside from the cases of *4 Ezra* and *2 Bar.*).

3. Eleven of the fourteen apocalypses (Dan, *1 En.*, *2 En.*, *Jub.*, *T. Levi*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Bar.*, *3. Bar.*, *Rev*, *Herm.*, *Mart. Ascen. Isa.*) contain information about the subsequent *dissemination* of the mysteries, following their exclusive disclosure to the seer.

- In seven of these eleven apocalypses (Dan, *1 En.*, *T. Levi*, *2 En.*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Bar.*, *Mart. Ascen. Isa.*), the dissemination details exhibit concern for maintaining the secrecy of the revelations until they are delivered to the terminal audience. The book of Daniel simply concludes with injunctions to seal the revelations, and no information is provided regarding the chain of transmission responsible for preserving the revelations, if such a chain is envisaged. In *1 Enoch* and the *Testament of Levi*, the seer's posterity comprises the chain of transmission, since he discloses his revelations to them in a testament. In *4 Ezra*, the chain of transmission is simply distinguished as the 'wise', and in *2 Baruch*, the chain of transmission is located somewhere among the scattered nine-and-a-half tribes. In the *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah*, Isaiah's revelations are preserved among the prophets. *2 Enoch* is somewhat unique in that the revelations are disseminated widely before the flood, but then divinely preserved through the flood and revealed in the last days. Three of these apocalypses include the seer's first-person report that he did not disclose aspects of his revelatory insight to others (cf. Dan 7:28; *T. Levi* 6:2; 8:18-19; *2 Bar.* 46:7).⁸⁸
- It is noteworthy that four of the apocalypses concerned with maintaining the secrecy of the seer's revelations until the last days refer to wisdom and understanding as key traits of the terminal audience (cf. Dan 11:33, 35; 12:3, 10; *1 En.* 82:1-3; 104:12-13; *4 Ezra* 12:38; 14:13, 26, 45-48; *2 Bar.*

88. Cf. *T. Ab.* 3:4, 12 [A].

27:15-28:1). This suggests an especially close connection between the trait of wisdom and one's ability to perceive that the last days have arrived, which is the result of receiving and responding to the written revelations of the seer. In some of the above references, the traits of wisdom and understanding possessed by the terminal audience are closely related to the sociological function of the terminal audience as eschatological teachers (cf. Dan 11:33; 12:3; *I En.* 82:1-3; 104:12-13).

- Alternatively, three of the eleven apocalypses that include dissemination details envisage an immediate, wide disclosure of the seer's exclusive revelatory insight. In *3 Baruch*, the seer is told to simply disclose the mysteries that were revealed to him, so that all may glorify God. In the book of Revelation and the *Shepherd of Hermas*, the seer is told to immediately disseminate his revelations on account of their immediate importance for the church.
- Finally, *Jubilees* does direct some attention to the dissemination of Moses' revelations, but the information is somewhat vague and ambiguous. On the one hand, *Jubilees* seems to assume that the revelations recorded in the text were transmitted in the same manner that is described in the Exodus narrative with reference to Moses' written revelation. On the other hand, the text also requires some degree of secret transmission apart from Israel's public Scriptures.

4. Since our data sample includes a considerable distribution of exclusionary statements, narrative isolation, and dissemination details, it is reasonable to conclude that these features represent fairly standard traits of the apocalypses. More specifically, it was argued that these features are all oriented around the generic portrayal of the apocalyptic seer as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries. This

is most obvious in the case of exclusionary statements, since they clearly assert the seer's exclusive status on account of the revelation of mysteries to him. Narrative isolation asserts the seer's status as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries more subtly, by indicating his singular participation in a given revelatory episode. Lastly, dissemination details are a consequence of the revelation of mysteries to a seer. The revelations exclusively disclosed to him are ultimately intended for a terminal audience—i.e., the author's real audience. All but two of the fourteen apocalypses—*Testament of Abraham* and *Apocalypse of Zephaniah*—contain at least one of these features. Therefore, throughout the Second Temple period and into the second century C.E., these are common features of the portrayals of apocalyptic seers in texts conforming to the apocalypse genre.

CHAPTER 4

HUMANS ENCOUNTERING THE DIVINE REALM

Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, apocalyptic seers are portrayed as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries. The mode of revelation often involves a cosmic journey,¹ which brings the seer to the location where mysteries reside, beyond the reach of human observation. The seer is accompanied by an angelic mediator, who functions as a divine tour guide, explaining mysteries to him. In texts that do not involve a cosmic journey,² mysteries are revealed primarily through visions and dialogue. In contrast with cosmic journeys, the seer remains firmly situated within the normal realm of humanity, though the realities of the divine realm are, in a sense, brought to the seer in the form of visions and angelic epiphanies. The visions are coupled with interpretations, delivered to the seer by an angelic mediator, or occasionally by divine speech directly from God. Through both modes of disclosure, the seer encounters the divine realm—the mysteries and beings associated with the realm beyond that of humanity.

During his encounter with the divine realm, the seer's humanity becomes especially prominent and constitutes a major aspect of the portrayal of him.³

1. E.g., *1 Enoch*, *2 Enoch*, *Testament of Levi*, *Apocalypse of Abraham*, *3 Baruch*, *Testament of Abraham*, *Apocalypse of Zephaniah*, *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah*.

2. E.g., *Daniel*, *Jubilees*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*, *Shepherd of Hermas*, *Revelation*. However, Collins correctly notes that *Revelation* does include aspects of the “otherworldly journey motif” (Adela Yarbro Collins, “The Early Christian Apocalypses,” 71).

3. This study uses the word “humanity” only in the sense of that which arises from the quality of being *human*, not in the sense of that which arises from the quality of being *humane*, compassionate, or sympathetic. In other words, this study uses the word “humanity” to refer to the *human-ness* of the seer.

Scholarship has indeed recognized that the various aspects of the seer's humanity are integral to the apocalypse genre,⁴ and that these are often key components of certain literary forms.⁵ Yet, the humanity of apocalyptic seers, as a topic itself, has not received much sustained attention in previous scholarship.⁶ Therefore, this chapter will detail the typical ways in which apocalyptic seers are portrayed as *humans* encountering the divine realm. This is necessary in order that we might be able to determine whether, and in what ways, the humanity of apocalyptic seers, as a generic feature of the apocalypses, influenced the portrayal of Peter in Matthew's Gospel and source material. This chapter will address the humanity of apocalyptic seers in two general rubrics, which correspond to the aspects of the seer's humanity that are especially prominent against the backdrop of the divine realm:

1. Cognitive Humanity:⁷ The divine realm is unfamiliar to the seer, and as a result of this, his cognitive humanity is exhibited. On cosmic journeys, the seer is unable to comprehend what he observes, and so he regularly asks the angelic mediator questions,⁸ and sometimes he utters statements that reflect a human point of view. When the mode of revelation is a vision, the seer's cognitive humanity is expressed by his inability to immediately perceive the meaning of the vision. Therefore, the seer asks questions, and he requests divine explanation of the vision so that he might understand its significance.

2. Emotional and Physical Humanity:⁹ The seer's encounter with the divine realm has emotional and physical effects upon his humanity. He experiences

4. Cf. the master paradigm for the genre in John J. Collins, "Morphology," 5–9. See also Koch, *Rediscovery*, 24–25; Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Early Christian Apocalypses," 67; Fallon, "The Gnostic Apocalypses," 125; Martha Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), esp. 41–67.

5. See Susan Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition* (HSM 30; Chico, Cal.: Scholars, 1980), esp. 177ff; Francis Flannery, "Dream and Vision Reports," in *EDEJ* (ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 550–52.

6. E.g., the major studies of Russell (Russell, *Method and Message*) and Rowland (Rowland, *Open Heaven*) only provide passing comment about the various expressions of the seer's humanity and the importance of these for the genre.

7. As a point of clarification, the term "cognitive humanity" refers to thinking and cognitive processes which arise out of a seer's human quality or essence. This term does not refer to thinking that can be described as *humane* on account of its compassion or sympathy.

8. Commenting on the presence of a divine mediator in the apocalypses, Collins says, "This figure indicates that the revelation is not intelligible without supernatural aid. It is out of this world" (John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 5–6).

9. To be clear, the term "emotional and physical humanity" or any variations thereof refers to the seer's display of human emotions or human physicality. This term does not refer to emotions that are *humane* on account of their display of compassion or sympathy, nor does this term refer to behavior that is physically *humane* in some way.

powerful emotions commensurate with the tone of what he observes. Frequently, the divine realm has debilitating effects upon the seer, since he encounters the realm beyond that of flesh and blood.¹⁰ On account of these debilitating effects of the divine realm, the seer often receives reassuring words and restoring physical contact from divine beings, which enable him to continue his encounter with the divine realm.

Both manifestations of the seer's humanity reflect an underlying duality between humanity and the mysteries and beings of the divine realm.

As in the previous chapter, the procedure will be to progress from the earlier apocalypses to the later ones.

Daniel

Cognitive Humanity

Daniel's cognitive humanity is exhibited in his inability to understand the visions of chs. 7-12 on his own. In each case, he is dependent upon divine explanation in order to transition from a state of perplexity to understanding.¹¹ Thus, following his first vision, he approaches one of the nearby angelic figures in search of the interpretation (Dan 7:16a, 19-20; ויציבא אבעא; τὴν ἀκριβείαν ἐζητοῦν), which is then given to him (7:16b, 23-27). Again, after the second vision, while Daniel is attempting to understand it (8:15; ואבקשה בינה; ἐζητοῦν διανοηθῆναι [OG]; ἐζητοῦν σύνεσιν [Th]), Gabriel appears in order to give him the interpretation,¹² which enables Daniel to understand its significance. Yet again, in the third vision, the text stresses that Gabriel's appearance to Daniel is for the purpose of causing him to understand—Gabriel announces to Daniel that he has come to impart understanding

10. "The disposition of the seer before the revelation and his reaction to it typically emphasize human helplessness in the face of the supernatural" (Ibid., 6).

11. In the court tales of chs. 1-6, the Gentile kings exhibit cognitive humanity that is analogous to Daniel's in chs. 7-12. Daniel mainly functions as the mediator, who delivers interpretations that enable the kings to understand their visions. Although there certainly are differences between a human mediator of revelation and an angelic one, Collins too strongly emphasizes this: "The contrast between the human interpreter (Daniel) in Daniel 4 and 6 and the angelic interpreter in chaps. 7-12 is significant for the change in genre and context between the two halves of the book" (John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 311).

12. Daniel hears a voice telling Gabriel to "help this man understand the vision [הבן להלוי] (8:16; cf. v. 17). את-המרצה; συνέτισον ἐκεῖνον τὴν ὅρασιν]" (8:16; cf. v. 17).

(9:22),¹³ and he twice commands Daniel to understand.¹⁴ In the fourth vision, as in the third, the direct speech of the angel reiterates that his function is to cause Daniel to understand—he commands Daniel to understand (10:11; דַּבֵּר; διανοήθητι [OG]; σύνεξ [Th]), he states that he has come as a result of Daniel’s pursuit of understanding (10:12), and he clarifies that he has come to cause Daniel to understand (10:14).¹⁵

However, even after Daniel receives divine explanations of his visions, the text is not entirely clear about whether he ultimately understands their significance. For example, despite Gabriel’s explanation of the second vision, Daniel declares at the conclusion that he did not understand it (8:27; וְאִין מְבִין; καὶ οὐδεὶς ἦν ὁ διανοούμενος [OG]; καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ συνίων [Th]).¹⁶ Similarly, following the historical review of chs. 10-12 and the statement about the time of fulfillment (12:6-7), Daniel says, “I heard but could not understand [וְלֹא אֲבִין; καὶ οὐ διενοήθην (OG); καὶ οὐ συνῆκα (Th)]; so I said, ‘My lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?’” (12:8). In response to this question, the angel does provide further comment, but the text concludes somewhat open-endedly regarding whether Daniel achieved the understanding that he lacked in 12:8. Therefore, the reader is left uncertain regarding the degree to which Daniel understood this final vision; and since it is presented as the culmination of the preceding three visions, this uncertainty extends to them as well.

13. וְאִין מְבִין; ἐξῆλθον ὑποδεῖξαι σοὶ διάνοιαν (OG); ἐξῆλθον συμβιβάζσαι σε σύνεσιν (Th).

14. “Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision” (9:23; וְבִין בְּדִבְרֵי הַבְּרָאָה; καὶ διανοήθητι τὸ πρόσταγμα [OG]; καὶ ἐννοήθητι ἐν τῷ ῥήματι καὶ σύνεξ ἐν τῇ ὁπτασίᾳ [Th]); “Know therefore and understand” (9:25; וְתֵדַע וְתִשְׁכַּח; καὶ γνώση καὶ διανοηθήσῃ [OG]; καὶ γνώση καὶ συνήσεις [Th]).

15. וְאִין מְבִין; ἐξῆλθον ὑποδεῖξαι σοὶ (OG); ἐξῆλθον συνετίσαι σε (Th).

16. The Greek versions render this passage as “there was no one who understood,” but this likely reflects an attempt to mitigate the apparent contradiction between Daniel’s inability to understand, and the fact that he was just supplied with the understanding of the vision (cf. 8:16, 17). Collins correctly remarks, “The point is surely that although Daniel has heard the interpretation, it does not make sense to him, as well it should not, since it supposedly refers to events and people in the distant future” (Ibid., 342).

Emotional and Physical Humanity

As a result of the first vision (ch. 7), Daniel's spirit is troubled (אתכרית רוחי; ἔφριξεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐν τῇ ἔξει μου [Th]), and he is disturbed (יבהלני; ἐτάρασσόν με [Th]) (7:15).¹⁷ At the conclusion of the vision and its explanation, Daniel recounts, "my thoughts greatly terrified me, and my face turned pale..." (7:28).¹⁸ When Gabriel approaches him to explain the second vision (ch. 8), Daniel is frightened (נבעתי) and falls prostrate (8:17), exhibiting the stereotypical response of fear in the face of the divine.¹⁹ The text elaborates that Daniel was in a trance-like state, face-down on the ground.²⁰ The conclusion to the second vision describes the adverse effects of the vision upon Daniel: "So I, Daniel, was overcome [נהייתי] and lay sick [והליתי; ἀσθενήσας (OG); ἐκοιμήθην καὶ ἐμαλακίσθην (Th)] for some days; then I arose and went about the king's business. But I was dismayed [ואשתומם; ἐξελνόμεν (OG); ἐθαύμαζον (Th)] by the vision and did not understand it" (8:27). Daniel responds very similarly in the fourth vision (chs. 10-12). In the presence of the divine being, he has no strength,²¹ and his countenance is adversely affected (10:8).²² His humanity fails him also in his inability to speak (10:15-16; ונאלמתי; καὶ ἐσιώπησα [OG]),²³ and the reiteration of Daniel's weakness, and even difficulty breathing, emphasizes his humanity when confronted with the divine (10:16-17). When confronted with revelation generally, and with divine beings specifically, Daniel's

17. In the OG, Daniel reports that he was "exhausted [ἀκηδιάσας]" (7:15).

18. שגיא רעיוני יבהלני חזיוי ישתנון עלי. σφόδρα ἐκστάσει περιειχόμεν καὶ ἡ ἔξις μου διήνεγκεν ἐμοί (OG); ἐπὶ πολὺ οἱ διαλογισμοί μου συνετάρασσόν με καὶ ἡ μορφή μου ἡλλοιώθη ἐπ' ἐμοί (Th).

19. Though the MT describes Daniel's fear, the OG says that he was distressed (θορυβέω), and Theodotian says that he was amazed (θαμβέω).

20. נרדמתי על־פני ארצה; ἐκοιμήθην ἐπὶ πρόσωπον χαμαι (OG). Theodotian omits the reference to Daniel's state of consciousness.

21. 10:8 [2x]; וְלֹא נִשְׁאַרְרִי כַח; καὶ οὐκ ἐγκατελείφθη ἐν ἐμοὶ ἰσχὺς; καὶ οὐ κατίσχυσα (OG); καὶ οὐχ ὑπελείφθη ἐν ἐμοὶ ἰσχὺς; καὶ οὐκ ἐκράτησα ἰσχύος (Th).

22. The focus of the MT on Daniel's outward appearance (והודי נהפך עלי למשחית) is picked up in Theodotian (ἡ δόξα μου μετεστράφη εἰς διαφθοράν), but the OG focuses on Daniel's inward state (καὶ ἰδοὺ πνεῦμα ἐπεστράφη ἐπ' ἐμὲ εἰς φθοράν).

23. Theodotian does not emphasize Daniel's speechlessness: καὶ κατενύγην—"I was pierced" or "I was stunned" (NETS).

humanity is vividly portrayed through his fear, weakness, inability to speak, and the enduring effects of these revelatory episodes upon him.

Just as Daniel is dependent upon otherworldly mediators for the explanations to his visions, which allows him to understand their significance, so also is he dependent upon them to overcome his failing humanity. For example, when Daniel is laying in terrified prostration after encountering Gabriel in the second vision, Gabriel touches him and raises him to his feet before explaining the vision to him (8:18). The fourth vision develops this even further, delineating several stages in the angel's restoration of Daniel to full human functioning. In the first stage, Daniel is touched, which brings him from full prostration to his hands and knees (10:10). In the second stage, Daniel is commanded by the angel to stand up, and he does so, though with trembling (10:11). The angel commands him not to fear (10:12), but Daniel, with faced bowed toward the ground, is unable to speak (10:15). In the third stage, therefore, one of the otherworldly beings present touches his lips, giving him the ability to speak (10:16). Now that Daniel is able to speak, he voices his weakness and failing humanity in the face of the angelic being: "My lord, because of the vision such pains have come upon me that I retain no strength. How can my lord's servant talk with my lord? For I am shaking, no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me" (10:16-17). Thus, in the fourth stage, an angelic being touches Daniel, providing him with the requisite strength to continue their revelatory interaction (10:18-19).

Summary

The portrayal of Daniel in the four visions of chs. 7-12 distinguishes between his bare observation of visions, on the one hand, and his understanding of them, on the other. Although Daniel contemplates the visions on his own (7:8; 8:5), he is ultimately dependent upon an angelic mediator in order to move from perplexity to

understanding (7:16, 19-27; 8:13-14, 15-16; 9:22-23, 25; 10:1, 11-12, 14; 12:8).²⁴

That this is the main purpose of the angelic mediators is noted by the MT's frequent use of the lexeme בִּין immediately preceding, and during, their appearances to Daniel (8:16, 17; 9:22, 23 [2x]; 10:11, 12, 14).²⁵ Notably, there is some ambivalence regarding whether Daniel achieves complete understanding of the visions, even after the angelic explanations. In light of the positive statements made about Daniel's character (cf. 9:23; 10:11, 19), the apparent deficiencies in his perception should not be viewed as reflecting negatively on him, but rather as an effect of his humanity while he struggles to appropriate God's (mainly ominous) plan for the righteous. Daniel's emotional and physical responses underscore the debilitating effects of the divine realm upon his humanity. When Daniel is encountered by divine beings, he exhibits extreme fear and the absence of any strength to stand on his own. He is utterly dependent upon them for even the most basic human functions in their presence. In sum, on account of his humanity, Daniel has difficulty understanding the divine realm, and he struggles to function when encountered by divine beings.

1 Enoch

Cognitive Humanity

Since the primary mode of Enoch's revelations is cosmic journey, his cognitive humanity is exhibited in questions about what he observes, and in statements that reflect a human point of view. Enoch asks about the identity of various beings (*1 En.* 18:14; 22:6; 40:8; 46:2), the constitution of things that he

24. Although Daniel is introduced as one who is able to understand dreams and visions (1:17), this statement should not be interpreted as referring to his intrinsic ability to do so. Rather, it reflects the polemical tone of chs. 1-6, which contrasts Daniel's ability to interpret dreams from that of his Babylonian counterparts—thus reflecting a contrast between Daniel's God, who is able to reveal mysteries, and the Babylonian deities, who are shown to be impotent. As Daniel clearly acknowledges in 2:30, he is not the source of 'understanding'.

25. The Greek versions translate the Hebrew verb בִּין with συνερίζω (8:16 [OG and Th]; 9:22 [Th]; 10:14 [Th]), διανοέομαι (8:17 [OG]; 9:23 [OG]; 10:11 [OG]; 10:12 [OG]), συνήμι (8:17 [Th]; 9:23 [Th]; 10:11 [Th]; 10:12 [Th]), ἐννοέω (9:23 [Th]), ὑποδείκνυμι (10:14 [OG]). They translate the Hebrew noun בִּינָה with διάνοια (9:22 [OG]) and σύνεσις (9:22 [Th]).

observes (43:3; 52:3), locations in the cosmos (23:3; 108:5), angelic activities (53:4; 54:4; 56:2; 61:2), reasons why things are the way that they are (21:4; 22:8; 27:1), and primordial events (60:9). Similarly, he utters pronouncements about the place where the rebellious angels are punished (“How terrible is this place and fearful to behold” [21:8]) and the Tree of Life, which awaits the righteous (“How beautiful is this tree and fragrant...” [24:5; cf. 32:5]).²⁶ His questions and pronouncements are met with angelic explanations, which enable Enoch to understand the mysteries that he observes.²⁷ That Enoch achieves an understanding of divine mysteries is expressed most clearly when angels permit him to read the heavenly tablets, which contain eschatological mysteries: “Then he said to me, ‘Enoch, look at the tablet(s) of heaven; read what is written upon them and understand (each element on them) one by one’. So I looked at the tablet(s) of heaven, read all the writing (on them), and came to understand everything” (81:1-2a; parentheses original). Similarly, in his testamentary dictation to his sons, Enoch says, “The vision of heaven was shown to me, and from the words of the watchers and the holy ones I have learned everything, and in the heavenly tablets I read everything and understood” (93:2c). A similar statement introduces the corpus of *1 Enoch*: “From the words of the watchers and the holy ones I heard everything; and as I heard everything from them, I also understood what I saw [καὶ ἔγνων ἐγὼ θεωρῶν]” (1:2ab; cf. 14:2-3). Like Daniel, Enoch transitions from mere observation of divine realities to an understanding of them through the aid of angelic explanation, despite the very different modes in which they

26. See also *1 En.* 22:2; 38:2.

27. Uriel’s counter-questions about Enoch’s inquisitiveness, which occasionally follow Enoch’s questions, probably serve the rhetorical function of emphasizing Enoch’s limited humanity in comparison with the divine understanding of mysteries possessed by heavenly beings, which Enoch acquires only by angelic explanation: “Enoch, why do you inquire, and why are you eager for the truth?” (*1 En.* 21:5); “Enoch, why do you inquire and why do you marvel about the fragrance of this tree, and why do you wish to learn the truth?” (25:1). Divine questions that emphasize the ontological duality between humanity and divinity appear in *1 En.* 21:9; 60:5; 65:5; *4 Ezra* 5:33; 7:15; 10:31; *2 Bar.* 22:2; 55:4; *Rev* 17:7; *Herm.* 2:3; 28:3; 54:1-3.

receive revelation.²⁸ Unlike Daniel, however, the reader is left with no doubt concerning whether Enoch fully understood the significance of his revelations.

Emotional and Physical Humanity

Enoch experiences a range of human emotions in response to the divine realm. He marvels at the sight of Jerusalem (26:6; ἐθαύμασα...λίαν ἐθαύμασα); he weeps and laments in response to his visions of the trials that will befall God's people (81:3; 89:67, 69; 90:3, 41-42); conversely, he blesses God when he learns of God's eschatological judgments on the wicked and righteous, and when he observes creation (22:14; 25:7; 27:5; 36:4; 39:9-12; 71:11-12; 81:3; 83:11-84:4; 90:40). Several times in the corpus of *I Enoch*, Enoch ascends to the heavenly throneroom and encounters God. As is normal in divine encounters (both epiphanies and throneroom encounters), he experiences intense fear and physical debilitation. After describing the heavenly temple, Enoch reports, "Fear enveloped me, and trembling seized me [φόβος με ἐκάλυπεν καὶ τρόμος με ἔλαβεν]; and I was quaking and trembling [καὶ ἤμην σειόμενος καὶ τρέμων], and I fell upon my face" (14:13-14; cf. v. 9). While prostrate and trembling with his face covered (14:24), Enoch is addressed by God, who dispatches an angel to raise him up (14:25) and reassure him: "Fear not [μὴ φοβηθῇς], Enoch, righteous man and scribe of truth" (15:1).²⁹ Similarly, in the *Similitudes*, Enoch sees God seated on the throne, which provokes intense fear, resulting in physical debilitation: "(Then) a great trembling and fear seized me and my loins and kidneys lost control. So I fell upon my face" (60:3; cf. v. 4; 39:14). An angel raises Enoch to his feet and supplies restorative strength (60:4). Once again, when Enoch ascends to the throne for his final transformation, he falls

28. In the *Books of Dreams* (*I En.* 83-90), Enoch does receive visions that do not involve a cosmic journey. Although Enoch's grandfather, Mahalalel, interprets the first vision for him (83:7), the second vision (i.e., the *Animal Apocalypse* [chs. 85-90]) is presented entirely apart from any divine explanation (though its significance would be obvious for the terminal audience).

29. Nickelsburg provides a helpful table comparing *I En.* 14-16 with other instances of the prophetic commissioning form, e.g., Isa 6; Ezek 1-2; Dan 7 (Nickelsburg, *I Enoch*, 255-56).

on his face, but is raised up by an angel (71:2-3; cf. v. 11). Therefore, as with Daniel, divine assistance always helps Enoch to overcome his human fear and the physical debilitation resulting from it.³⁰

Summary

Enoch's cognitive humanity is conveyed through his dependency on angelic explanations of the divine realities that he observes. His questions exhibit his cognitive limitations, and his pronouncements provide a human point of view on cosmological mysteries. Through divine explanation, Enoch moves past the limits of his cognitive humanity and achieves comprehensive understanding of cosmological and eschatological mysteries. His human emotions are commensurate with the content and tone of what is revealed to him. Ominous revelations cause him to weep, but those that display God's righteousness lead him to bless God. In ascents to God's throneroom, Enoch's intense fear leads to prostration and physical debilitation. Divine beings restore him to normal functioning, enabling him to continue the revelatory episode.³¹

Jubilees

There are no expressions of Moses' humanity in the book of Jubilees. This can be explained as an effect of its predominant presentation as divine dictation, rather than dialogue. Moses is shown no visions, nor is he taken on a cosmic journey. Therefore, he is not placed in a position of having to discern visionary imagery or unfamiliar cosmic geography.

30. Once Enoch has taken up permanent residence in the divine realm, he functions as an angelic mediator when Noah makes contact with him, assuaging his fear and restoring him to a standing posture (65:4-5, 9).

31. Enoch's dependency upon divine beings for explanation, reassurance, and restoration is probably an effect of what Nickelsburg refers to as the book's "ontological dualism between divine and human" (Ibid., 40).

Testament of Levi

Cognitive Humanity

Only the faintest hint of Levi's cognitive humanity finds expression during his first revelatory episode (*T. Levi* 2:5-5:7), which includes an ascent through the heavens. After passing through the first heaven, Levi sees the much more bright and lustrous second heaven, which causes him to ask, "Why are these things thus?" (2:9). The angelic mediator tells him not to be amazed by the second heaven (Μὴ θαύμαζε ἐπὶ τούτοις), since he will soon see the much more lustrous third heaven. Once in the third heaven, the angel does provide an extended explanation of the order of the heavens (3:1-8), which directly answers Levi's question of 2:9. Aside from this one question, Levi never explicitly requests an explanation of what is revealed to him. Yet, the text still emphasizes that Levi's revelations have supplied him with understanding, so that he might instruct his sons (4:5).³² As a result of the understanding given to Levi about the priesthood in his first vision, he perceives the significance of the second vision (8:1-19)—though it is plainly presented, apart from symbols and imagery—since it also concerns the priesthood: "When I awoke, I understood [συνῆκα] that this was like the first dream" (8:18; cf. *Dan* 8:27; *Ezek* 43:3). Therefore, the text deliberately signals that the revelatory episodes supply Levi with understanding concerning the future of the priesthood, yet it does not direct much attention to his cognitive humanity apart from the one question that he asks.

Emotional and Physical Humanity

Aside from the allusion to Levi's amazement in 2:9, the text does not report any of his emotional or physical responses during his revelatory episodes.

32. Like *4 Ezra*, the *Testament of Levi* also attributes the prophetic quality of 'understanding' to the apocalyptic seer before he receives revelations. Before the revelatory episode begins, a spirit of understanding comes upon Levi as he observes the wickedness of humankind, which causes him to pray for deliverance from judgment (2:3-4; cf. *4 Ezra* 5:22).

Summary

Levi's humanity does not contribute much to the portrayal of him during his revelatory episodes. His cognitive humanity is exhibited only through one question, which then leads to divine explanation of the heavenly realm. This explanation allows him to understand the destiny of the priesthood so that he can instruct his sons. The understanding that he achieves in his first revelatory episode enables him to understand the significance of his second revelatory episode. As in *1 Enoch*, there is no ambivalence regarding whether the seer fully understands the significance of the revelations that have been granted to him. As in *Jubilees*—but unlike every other apocalypse considered in this study—Levi's emotional and physical humanity are not described, apart from the allusion to his amazement in 2:9.

2 Enoch

Cognitive Humanity

As in *1 Enoch*, the primary mode of Enoch's revelations is a cosmic journey. In *2 Enoch*, however, the journey proceeds only through the seven heavens,³³ culminating at the throneroom of God in the seventh heaven. Again, Enoch's cognitive humanity is expressed through his questions and pronouncements concerning what he observes. When in the second heaven, Enoch asks why the angelic prisoners there are being tormented (*2 En.* 7:2); likewise, in the fifth heaven, he asks for an explanation of the angels who are dejected and silent (18:2). When Enoch sees Paradise and the Tree of Life in the third heaven, he exclaims, "How very pleasant is this place!" (8:8; cf. *1 En.* 24:5). The angels then carry him to the northern region of the third heaven, to the place of punishment for the wicked. When Enoch sees the menacing angels and their instruments for inflicting torture, he exclaims, "Woe, woe! How very frightful this place is!" (10:4; cf. 41:1-2; 42:2; *1 En.* 21:8).

33. Cf. to the cosmic tours in *1 Enoch*, which explore the horizontal dimensions of the cosmos as well.

Each of Enoch's questions and pronouncements is met with an angelic explanation, which enables him to understand what he observes. Moreover, once Enoch reaches the seventh heaven, God becomes the divine mediator, explaining everything to him: "[W]hatever you see and whatever things are standing still or moving about were brought to perfection by me [i.e., God]. I myself will explain it to you" (24:2). God then dictates how he created everything, and the events of primordial history. This gives Enoch a divine perspective on creation, moving him beyond the limits of his human perception (cf. 33:3 [J]). Therefore, when Enoch is returned to earth for thirty days in order to transmit this divine perspective of the cosmos and creation to other people, he is able to confidently proclaim, "And now therefore, my children, I know everything...I know everything, and everything I have written down in books..." (40:1-2 [J]).

Emotional and Physical Humanity

At a few points, Enoch reports his emotional and physical responses to the divine realm. In the second heaven, where he sees the rebellious angels being punished and hears their unceasing weeping, he reports that he "felt sorry for them" (7:4); likewise, he weeps because of the "perdition of the impious" (41:1 [A]). Just before Enoch ascends to the fifth heaven, he observes angels singing and worshipping God with musical instruments. The music is so wonderful that it cannot be described, yet he reports that it delighted him (17:1).³⁴ In the introductory epiphany, Enoch exhibits the typical human response of fear: "I was terrified; and the appearance of my face was changed because of fear" (1:7 [J]).³⁵ He bows before the angels (apparently voluntarily, thus the absence of a restorative touch from the

34. This angelic music serves as a foil for the angelic silence that Enoch observes in the fifth heaven, where the princes of the rebellious angels reside in dejection (18:2-3).

35. Before the introductory epiphany, Enoch reports that he was weeping and grieving (1:3). Details such as this about the disposition of the seer prior to a revelatory episode appear regularly in the first and second-century C.E. apocalypses (e.g., *4 Ezra* 3:1, 3; 5:21; 6:36-37; 9:27; *2 Bar.* 21:26; 48:25; 55:2; *3 Bar.* 1:3).

angelic mediators), and they reassure him, “Be brave, Enoch! Do not fear!” (1:8 [A]). He exhibits similar, but more intense, reactions when he arrives at the seventh heaven and encounters God on the throne. First, he encounters the angelic retinue of the seventh heaven, which terrifies him and causes him to tremble with fear (20:1). His angelic mediators pick him up and once again reassure him, “Be brave, Enoch! Do not be frightened!” (20:2). Second, he is terrified and falls on his face when his angelic mediators leave him at the threshold of the seventh heaven (21:1). He says, “Woe to me, my LORD! My soul has departed from me from fear and horror” (21:4). God sends the angel Gabriel to restore Enoch, who again tells him not to fear, and then lifts him and sets him in front of God (21:3, 5). Finally, in front of God, Enoch prostrates himself. God tells him, “Be brave, Enoch! Don’t be frightened! Stand up...” (22:5). The angel Michael then lifts Enoch up and brings him before the LORD (22:6).³⁶ Therefore, every time that Enoch responds fearfully to what he encounters in the divine realm, divine beings reassure him. In all but the introductory epiphany, his prostration and physical debilitation are met with divine restoration.

Summary

Enoch’s cognitive humanity is exhibited through his questions and pronouncements concerning the divine realm. His questions and pronouncements occur when he observes the places of punishment, on the one hand, and the place reserved for the righteous, on the other, and so flag the importance of these locations. Angelic explanations, and an explanation of creation directly from God, transfer him past the limits of his human perception, enabling him to understand the significance of divine realities and the cosmos. As in *1 Enoch* and the *Testament of Levi*, the text clearly asserts that Enoch achieved comprehensive understanding of what was revealed to him (40:1-2). His emotional and physical humanity are exhibited through

36. Cf. to the multi-staged reassurance and restoration of Daniel (Dan 10).

sorrow and weeping—in response to the pernicious fates awaiting the wicked—and delight. Additionally, he experiences fear and apparent debilitation when directly encountering divine beings. These beings supply his humanity with reassurance and restoration.

4 Ezra

Cognitive Humanity

Ezra's cognitive humanity features more prominently than that of any other apocalyptic seer, aside from Hermas. In his first revelatory episode (*4 Ezra* 3:1-5:15), Ezra utters a troubled prayer about the condition of Zion, which is related to the larger question of God's covenantal fidelity to his people (3:1-36). His prayer reflects his inability to reconcile previous revelation with his present situation. According to Ezra, this problem is exacerbated by a lack of revelation from God to explain "how [God's] way may be comprehended" (3:31). In the divine response to his prayer, Uriel explains that Ezra, as a human, is fundamentally unable to understand the ways of God, since he cannot even understand earthly matters: "Your understanding has utterly failed regarding this world, and do you think that you can comprehend the way of the Most High?" (4:2). When Ezra responds affirmatively to this question (4:3), Uriel reiterates the deficiency of Ezra's human understanding: "You cannot understand the things with which you have grown up; how then can your mind comprehend the way of the Most High? And how can one who is already worn out by the corrupt world understand incorruption?" (4:10-11).³⁷ To this, Ezra protests, "It would be better for us not to be here than to come here and live in ungodliness, and to suffer and not understand why" (4:12).

37. Uriel's answer to Ezra here, along with Ezra's preceding prayer (3:1-36), were possibly influenced thematically by Jeremiah's questions of theodicy and the divine response to him in Jer 12:1-13 (cf. esp. *4 Ezra* 4:10-11 to Jer 12:5; cf. also *2 Bar.* 55:4-8).

Uriel continues to resist Ezra's request for revelation concerning these matters. By way of a parable, Uriel makes the point that humans are rightly limited to their cognitive humanity, which excludes heavenly matters: "For as the land is assigned to the forest and the sea to its waves, so also those who dwell upon earth can understand only what is on earth, and he who is above the heavens can understand what is above the height of the heavens" (4:21; cf. John 3:12-13). Ezra's response maneuvers around Uriel's clearly delimited categories by insisting that his prophetic "power of understanding" obligates Uriel to address his questions,³⁸ and that his questions do in fact pertain to earthly matters:

I beseech you, my lord, why have I been endowed with the power of understanding? For I did not wish to inquire about the ways above, but about those things which we daily experience: why Israel has been given over to the gentiles as a reproach; why the people whom you loved has been given to godless tribes, and the Law of our fathers has been made of no effect and the written covenants no longer exist; and why we pass from the world like locusts, and our life is like a mist, and we are not worthy to obtain mercy. But what will he do for his name, by which we are called? It is about these things that I have asked (4:22-25).

Although this statement has been interpreted as a polemic against the kind of cosmic speculation contained in some apocalypses, this is certainly not its main objective. Rather, it questions the sharp distinction between heavenly and earthly matters that Uriel's statements in 4:2, 10-11, 21 have attempted to maintain. The text does not clarify whether Uriel is convinced by Ezra's argument, but the following revelatory dialogue implies that Ezra has partially persuaded him (cf. 4:26-5:13).

In the second revelatory episode (5:20-6:34), Uriel once again emphasizes that Ezra's limited human understanding cannot comprehend God's ways. After Ezra's prayer, which questions why God has permitted his chosen people to suffer at the hands of others, Ezra explains to Uriel that his prayer represents his striving "to

38. Ezra's reference to his "power of understanding" refers to his prophetic ability/office (as an apocalyptic seer) by way of a technical usage of the 'understand' word group (e.g., 5:21-22; 14:39-42; cf. *T. Levi* 2:3). Thus, the apocalyptic books he publishes contain "the spring of understanding" (14:47).

understand the way of the Most High and to search out part of his judgment” (5:34). To this, Uriel bluntly responds, “You cannot” (5:35). Uriel then makes this point by asking Ezra to do things that are impossible for any human to do (5:36-37). When Ezra acknowledges that humans are incapable of performing such feats,³⁹ Uriel explains, “Just as you cannot do one of the things that were mentioned, so you cannot discover my judgment, or the goal of the love that I have promised my people” (5:40). In other words, Ezra’s cognitive humanity prevents him from understanding why God has allowed his people to suffer as they have. Nevertheless, as in the first revelatory episode, the following dialogue does provide some explanation of God’s judgment (cf. 5:42, 43 to 5:34, 40). Moreover, in episode 3 (6:35-9:25), Uriel (speaking for God) says, “This is my judgment and its prescribed order; and to you alone have I shown these things” (7:[44]). Therefore, it seems that Ezra has partially succeeded in his quest for revelation concerning God’s judgments, despite Uriel’s initial noncompliance.

As in the other apocalypses, Ezra’s cognitive humanity is also expressed through his questions and pronouncements concerning what is revealed to him. The first four revelatory episodes (episode 1 [3:1-5:15]; episode 2 [5:20-6:34]; episode 3 [6:35-9:25]; episode 4 [9:26-10:59]) are structured similarly to Dan 9, where a prayer uttered by the seer anticipates and eventuates an encounter with an angelic mediator.⁴⁰ Ezra’s prayers contain questions of theodicy (3:1-36; 5:21-30; 6:38-59; 9:27ff.), which are answered to some degree in the remainder of the revelatory episode. Additionally, during his revelatory dialogues with Uriel, Ezra asks questions about: the eschatological timeline (4:33, 45-46, 51; 6:7; 8:63);⁴¹ eschatological fates of the wicked and righteous (5:41; 7:[46], [75], [100], [102]-[103], [111]); why

39. Cf. *Apoc. Ab.* 20:1-5, where Abraham responds to God’s request to count the stars of the heavens: “When can I? For I am a man.”

40. Cf. to similarly structured episodes in 2 *Bar.* 21:1-30:5; 35:1-43:3; 48:1-76:5; 3 *Bar.* 1ff.; cf. also *T. Levi* 2:1-4ff; *1 En.* 84-90.

41. Perhaps also 6:11-12.

things are the way that they are, and whether they could be different (5:43, 45; 7:[117]-[125]; 8:44); and the Messiah (5:56). Ezra's human point of view is also exhibited in his pronouncements, which often take the form of "It would have been better..." (e.g., 4:12; 7:[63], [66], [69], [116]; cf. 7:[45]; 9:15-16; 13:16-20). Each of Ezra's questions and pronouncements are met with a divine explanation, which allows him to transcend the limitations of his human perception and point of view.

In the revelatory episodes that involve visions (i.e., episodes 4-6), Ezra's cognitive humanity prohibits him from understanding the significance of what he observes apart from divine explanation. When Ezra sees the vision of the woman, who then changes into the heavenly Jerusalem, he is "deprived of [his] understanding" (10:30; cf. vv. 25, 28). Thus, when Uriel appears, Ezra expresses that he is distressed since he has seen what he cannot understand, and he asks Uriel to explain the vision (10:35, 37; cf. v. 32). Likewise, after observing the vision of the eagle, Ezra awakens "in great perplexity of mind," and he asks for the interpretation and meaning of the vision (12:3-9). Once again, after observing the vision of the man from the sea, Ezra awakens and asks for an interpretation (13:14-15). Therefore, Ezra is not able to understand the significance of what is revealed to him in his visions apart from divine explanations. As in the book of Daniel, each vision is followed by an angelic interpretation, which transfers the seer from mere observation of mysteries to an understanding of them. Through these divine interpretations and divine dialogue, Ezra transcends the limits of his cognitive humanity.

Emotional and Physical Humanity

4 *Ezra* diverges from the other apocalypses in that Ezra never exhibits the standard responses of fear and debilitation during an angelic epiphany, despite his repeated interaction with the angel Uriel. Yet, his emotional and physical humanity still feature prominently. As a precursor to the first four revelatory episodes, Ezra

reports that he was troubled or disturbed when uttering his distressed prayers (3:1-3; 5:21; 6:36-37; 9:27; cf. *2 En.* 1:3). At the conclusion to the first revelatory episode, Ezra reports, “I awoke, and my body shuddered violently, and my soul was so troubled that it fainted” (5:14; cf. Dan 7:28; 8:27; *1 En.* 90:40-42). Similarly, before receiving the explanations of his dream-visions in episodes 5 and 6, Ezra reports his amazement (13:11), fear, distress, and his physical responses to the revelation (12:3-6; 13:14; cf. Dan 7:15). Ezra’s emotional and physical humanity are exhibited most prominently when he encounters the woman in the field, who then transforms into the heavenly Jerusalem (episode 4). He is terrified by her appearance (10:25-28) and falls prostrate on the ground “like a corpse” (10:30; cf. Rev 1:17; *T. Ab.* 9:1 [A]).⁴²

As is normal in the apocalypses, Ezra’s emotional and physical humanity are assuaged by divine reassurance and restorative touches. Therefore, Uriel reassures Ezra that he should not be afraid, despite the desolation of Zion and the ominous eschatological events to come (6:34; 10:55; cf. 6:15). When Ezra is physically overcome by the revelations, Uriel comforts and strengthens him, restoring him to upright posture (5:15; 10:30, 33). Additionally, over the course of the entire apocalypse, Ezra transitions from his initial distress to a degree of consolation, which is marked by his emotional response of praise at the conclusion to episode 6: “Then I arose and walked in the field, giving great glory and praise to the Most High because of his wonders, which he did from time to time, and because he governs the times and whatever things come to pass in their seasons” (13:57; cf. Dan 4:34-35).

Summary

In episodes 1 and 2, Ezra’s cognitive humanity is the specific topic of his dialogues with the angel Uriel. Although Uriel maintains that Ezra’s limited human understanding prohibits him from achieving an understanding of God’s ways, Ezra

42. It should be noted that Ezra’s prostration is a response to the content of the vision, and not a response to the epiphany of the angel Uriel.

insists that he is able to understand heavenly matters (4:2-3), and that such heavenly matters are actually of extreme importance to humans in the earthly realm (4:22-25). In an apparent concession to Ezra's claims, eschatological mysteries are revealed to him. During the first four revelatory episodes, Ezra's cognitive humanity is exhibited through questions, which vocalize the limitations of his human understanding, and pronouncements, which provide a human point of view on heavenly (or eschatological) matters. Similarly, in the visions of episodes 5-7, Ezra cannot understand their meaning apart from angelic explanation. Therefore, divine responses to his questions and divine explanations of his visions move him past the limitations of his cognitive humanity, enabling him to understand their significance. Likewise, divine reassurance and restorative touches enable him to overcome the debilitating effects of the revelations upon his emotional and physical humanity.

In contrast with other apocalypses considered thus far, the angelic mediator, Uriel, does take an antagonistic tone with Ezra at points. He claims that a human like Ezra cannot understand the ways of God (4:2, 10-11, 21; 5:35-37, 40); he questions whether Ezra believes that he loves Israel more than God does (5:33; cf. 4:34; 8:47a); and he is critical of Ezra for considering the present rather than what is yet to come (7:15). In a few places, Ezra is told not to ask any more questions about the topic in view (6:10; 8:55; 9:13). Moreover, when Ezra questions whether the fate of the wicked is just, Uriel sharply rebukes him: "You are not a better judge than God, or wiser than the Most High!" (7:19). Uriel's antagonistic tone must be interpreted against the backdrop of the glowing statements made about Ezra elsewhere in the apocalypse (e.g., 6:32-33; 7:[67]-[77]; 8:47b-54; 10:38-40, 55-58; 13:53-56), the direct comparison of him with Moses (14:1-6, 37-48), and his removal from the earth before death (14:9). In light of these, it does not seem likely that Uriel's antagonistic tone reflects a negative or ambivalent view of Ezra himself; rather, it seems that

Uriel's tone is directed towards Ezra's human point of view,⁴³ which is fundamentally different than the divine point of view that is required to faithfully grapple with the problems of Gentile hegemony, sin, and divine justice. The revelations then granted to Ezra recalibrate his point of view, supplying him with a divine perspective on the present age. Thus, over the course of the apocalypse, Ezra transitions from distress to consolation.⁴⁴ For the terminal audience, these revelations likewise move them from their human point of view to a divine understanding of their circumstances. Through this converted perspective, they also move from distress to consolation.⁴⁵

2 Baruch

Cognitive Humanity

As in *4 Ezra*, the limitations of human understanding are also a topic of Baruch's dialogues with God. In the fourth revelatory episode (2 *Bar.* 13:1-20:6), Baruch laments that humans cannot understand God's judgment (i.e., why God has not dealt mercifully with Zion on account of the righteous [14:6-9]), nor is Baruch able to understand why the earth was made for the righteous, yet it outlasts them since they die.⁴⁶ God affirms that Baruch is "rightly astonished about man's departure [i.e., death],"⁴⁷ but that he is incorrect about the potential for humans to understand God's judgment, since the Law had in fact provided understanding of it (15:1-6).⁴⁸ In

43. In *4 Ezra*, the seer's human point of view is much more fully expressed than in the other apocalypses considered thus far. Whereas Ezra engages in lengthy dialogue regarding his concerns, most other apocalyptic seers express their human point of view only occasionally, through terse pronouncements (e.g., *1 En.* 21:8; 24:5; *2 En.* 8:8; 10:4).

44. So Breech, "Form and Function," 272-74.

45. "By identifying with Ezra, the reader can acknowledge the dilemmas of history, but come to experience the 'apocalyptic cure' by turning his attention to the transcendent perspective provided by the angel and the dream visions" (John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 211). Similarly, Philip F. Esler, "The Social Function of *4 Ezra*," *JSNT* 53 (1994): 121.

46. The same concern appears in *Apoc. Sedr.* 3:3-7.

47. Brackets mine.

48. This seems to be the opposite of what Uriel tells Ezra about the potential for humans to understand God's judgment (cf. *4 Ezra* 5:35), though each text may represent different definitions of 'God's judgment', which would resolve their apparent disagreement on this point.

other words, previous revelation provided sufficient understanding of God's judgment for sin, but Baruch has correctly observed that humans cannot understand the death of the righteous. In order that Baruch might understand how God deals justly with the righteous even though they die, God then explains to him that there is another world coming, which the righteous will inherit in the last days (15:7-20:2). Moreover, God promises additional disclosure, which will help him to understand the ultimate fates of the righteous and the wicked: "I shall show you my strong judgment and my unexplorable ways" (20:4). Therefore, the revelation granted to Baruch enables him to transcend the limitations of his cognitive humanity, specifically with regard to the inscrutable matter of the death of the righteous.⁴⁹

Not only does Baruch explicitly acknowledge his cognitive humanity during his dialogue with God (14:15; 24:3-4; cf. 23:2), but it is also exhibited in his questions about theodicy (3:4-9; 5:1; 11:4; 14:3-5) and eschatological details (16:1; 21:19; 26:1; 28:5, 7; 41:1, 5-6; 49:2-3; 52:1-2). After being told about the tribulation, Baruch utters a pronouncement from his human point of view: "It is good that man should come so far and see, but it is better that he should not come so far lest he fall" (28:3). Additionally, Baruch cannot understand the significance of the visions that are revealed to him,⁵⁰ and he must ask for divine interpretations (38:3; 54:6, 20). As is normally the case, Baruch's questions are met with answers, and he is given explanations of the visions that he observes. Through divine assistance, therefore, Baruch overcomes the limitations of his cognitive humanity and thereby grasps an understanding of the mysteries that are revealed to him (cf. 43:1).

49. "[God] vindicates Himself vis-à-vis Baruch's questions by revealing to Baruch that His justice and power are effective in this world, although they will be manifest only in the eschaton" (Sayler, *Have the Promises Failed?* 42).

50. Like several other seers, Baruch contemplates the meaning of the vision on his own just before the divine interpretation is granted (cf. 2 *Bar.* 55:3 to Dan 7:8; 8:5; 4 *Ezra* 10:25; *Apoc. Ab.* 8:1; *Herm.* 2:1-2).

Emotional and Physical Humanity

Baruch's lamentations over the condition of Jerusalem, which precede several of the revelatory episodes (e.g., episode 2 [6:2]; episode 3 [9:2]; episode 4 [10:5-12:5]), are the main expressions of his emotional humanity. Baruch only exhibits fear once—when he awakens after seeing the vision of a cloud coming up from the sea (53:12; cf. 55:6-7). In a departure from many of the other apocalypses, he never exhibits fear in response to his dialogues with God, nor in response to his encounter with the angel Rameel (cf. 55:3ff.). In episodes 5 (21:1-30:5) and 7 (48:1-76:5), after praying and just before receiving revelation, Baruch reports, "I became very weak" (21:26; 48:25). Baruch receives divinely supplied strength to overcome his weakness only in episode 5: "[T]he heaven was opened, and I saw, and strength was given to me..." (22:1). Therefore, Baruch's physical humanity does feature in the portrayal of him, yet he never experiences the physical debilitation that is so common of seers in the apocalypses. Like *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch* portrays the seer as progressing from distress to consolation, which is the cumulative effect of the revelatory episodes (cf. 81:4; 54:4).

Summary

Baruch's cognitive humanity is a specific topic of his dialogue with God. After God affirms Baruch's perplexity about the death of the righteous, further revelations provide Baruch with some degree of understanding, since they disclose the ultimate fates of the righteous and wicked. Therefore, these revelations move him past the threshold of his cognitive humanity. Likewise, during the revelatory episodes, Baruch's cognitive humanity is exhibited in his questions about what he observes, and in his pronouncement in 28:3. Moreover, he requires divine explanation of his visions in order to perceive their significance. Baruch's emotional and physical humanity are much more muted than that of many other apocalyptic

seers. He never exhibits the terror and physical debilitation that often accompany encounters with divine beings. Nevertheless, his lamentations, which precede several of the revelatory dialogues, indicate his distress about his circumstances, and he experiences weakness before two installments of revelation.

Apocalypse of Abraham

Cognitive Humanity

Abraham's cognitive humanity is exhibited in his questions about what he witnesses during his revelatory episode (*Apoc. Ab.* 9-32), which includes a cosmic journey. He asks Iaoel, the angelic mediator, questions about the unclean bird (i.e., Azazel) whom he encounters (13:6), and about why Iaoel has brought him to the fiery place of God's presence in the heavens (16:1). During his cosmic journey, Abraham enters into extensive direct dialogue with God (ch. 19ff.), and the angelic mediator ceases to be a character in the apocalypse. At one point, a reworked form of Gen 13:16; 15:5 (cf. Hos 1:10; Jer 33:22) underscores Abraham's human limitations: "Look from on high at the stars which are beneath you and count them for me and tell me their number!" And I said, 'When can I? For I am a man'" (*Apoc. Ab.* 20:3-4).⁵¹ While viewing primordial and eschatological visions, Abraham asks God about specific features of the visions (22:1, 3; 23:9; 25:3; 29:7), why things are the way that they are (20:7; 23:12, 14; 26:1; 27:6), and the temporal details of eschatological events (28:2; 29:1). Divine answers to these questions supply Abraham with understanding. Furthermore, what Abraham is unable to understand about the vision on his own, God explains to him: "And you will know what will be and how much will be for your seed in the last days. And what you cannot understand, I will make known to you...and I will tell you what I have kept in my heart" (23:3; cf. 24:2; 26:2;

51. This functions similarly to the divine riddles posed to Ezra (e.g., *4 Ezra* 4:5-6), but stands in contrast to the comprehensive understanding of the cosmos bestowed upon Enoch (cf. *1 En.* 93:14; "I have fully counted the stars" [*2 En.* 40:2-3 {A}]).

Jub. 12:27b).⁵² Yet, despite God's explanations of the visions, Abraham professes deficient understanding upon returning to the earth: "Eternal, Mighty One, I am no longer in the glory in which I was above, and all that my soul desired to understand in my heart I do not understand" (30:1). God then gives him the explanation of the ten plagues and the fate of the wicked, who have harassed Abraham's seed (30:2ff.). Like the conclusion to the final vision in the book of Daniel (Dan 12:8-13), this conclusion remains somewhat ambivalent about whether the seer fully understands what has been revealed to him.

Emotional and Physical Humanity

After hearing the voice of God, Abraham is amazed, his soul flees from him, and he falls down on his face from lack of strength to stand (10:2; cf. 17:2-5). God dispatches the angel Iaoel to consecrate Abraham, and to "strengthen him against his trembling" (10:3). Iaoel then takes Abraham by the hand and sets him on his feet, saying, "Stand up, Abraham, friend of God who has loved you, let human trembling not enfold you!" (10:5; cf. 11:1). Lest Abraham exhibit the typical response of fear during an epiphany, Iaoel reassures him: "Let my appearance not frighten you, nor my speech trouble your soul" (11:4). Similarly, during his cosmic journey, he is weakened and afraid when he sees the luminous abode of God (16:1). Again, Iaoel tells Abraham not to fear (16:2), nor to let his spirit weaken, "for I am with you, strengthening you" (16:4). Therefore, whenever Abraham's humanity manifests itself in fear, weakness, and debilitation, the angelic mediator consoles and revitalizes him through reassuring words and restorative touches.

Summary

Abraham's cognitive humanity is expressed in his questions about what he

52. God's dialogue with Abraham concludes with an injunction, probably based on Isa 6:9-10: "See, Abraham, what you have seen, hear what you have heard, know what you have known" (29:21). Cf. also Num 24:4, 16; Deut 29:2-4; Job 13:1; Isa 32:3-4; 42:18-20; Jer 5:21; Ezek 12:2.

observes, and in his inability to fulfill God's request to count the stars. Each question is followed by an answer, and God himself provides explanations of what Abraham cannot understand on his own. Despite these explanations, however, Abraham expresses his deficient understanding when he returns to the earth at the conclusion of his cosmic journey. As in the book of Daniel, the reader is left uncertain as to whether Abraham fully understands what has been revealed to him. In light of Abraham's status as the progenitor of the righteous (cf. 10:16; 20:5; 22:5; 29:17-19), the direct contrast of him with the demon Azazel (13:7, 14; 22:5), and the favorable divine estimation of him articulated during his revelatory episode (e.g., 10:5-6; 14:2), we should not conclude that any deficiencies in his perception are designed to reflect negatively on him. Abraham's emotional and physical humanity are exhibited by his fear and weakness in the presence of divine beings, and in response to certain features of the revelation. Divine reassurance and restoration overcome the adverse effects of the divine realm upon his humanity.

Testament of Abraham

Cognitive Humanity

Like the other apocalyptic seers who are taken on a cosmic journey, Abraham also expresses his cognitive humanity through questions concerning what he observes. He asks about: the identity of various figures (10:4[A]; 11:8[A]; 13:1[A]; 8:7[B]; 9:10[B]; 11:1[B]), the judgment of the wicked (12:15[A]; 9:1, 6[B]; 11:5-6[B]), and the judgment of a soul whose wicked and righteous deeds are equal (14:1, 3, 7[A]).⁵³ In one case, the angelic mediator, Michael, seems surprised that Abraham

53. Uniquely among the apocalypses, Abraham is permitted to destroy certain individuals as he observes their sinful behavior while touring the earth (10:6-7, 9, 11[A]; 12:3-11[B]). However, after three instances of this, God stops Abraham's tour of the earth, since Abraham would mercilessly destroy everyone if given the chance (10:12-14[A]; 12:12-13[B]). In Recension A, Abraham is then shown the judgment of sinners, in order that he might repent for destroying them. Therefore, divine revelation becomes a corrective to Abraham's human perspective on the judgment of sinners. However, in Recension B, Abraham is simply returned to his house, and there is no resolution of his mercilessness.

requires an explanation of what he sees, and asks in return, “Do you not know who he is?” (8:8[B]; cf. Zech 4:4-5, 13). This sharply contrasts Abraham’s cognitive humanity with the cognition of divine beings, for whom the divine realm is entirely understandable. When the journey concludes, Abraham is visited by Death,⁵⁴ but does not immediately surrender to his powers. His dialogue with this figure also includes questions about the nature and purpose of Death (16:10, 14; 17:4, 6; 18:3, 5; 19:4; 20:1[A]; 13:14[B]). In both the cosmic journey (10:1-15:2[A]) and the dialogue with Death (16:7-20:14[A]), divine answers move Abraham past his human point of view regarding the matters of death and judgment. However, due to the strongly ironic portrayal of Abraham, the reader is perhaps left with the impression that the revelations had no significant effect on Abraham, since he remained obstinate to God’s purpose (that he die) until the conclusion.⁵⁵

Emotional and Physical Humanity

Early in the narrative, when Michael’s tears become precious stones, Abraham responds with astonishment (ἐκπλαγείς [3:12{A}]; cf. 7:10[A]). Later, after Abraham realizes that Michael is an angel, he exhibits the typical response of physical debilitation during an angelic epiphany, falling upon his face “as one dead [ὡς νεκρός]” (9:1[A]; cf. Rev 1:17; 4 Ezra 10:30). In Recension B, when Michael visits Abraham as Death, Abraham responds with fear on account of Death’s glorious appearance (13:4, 6-7[B]). During the cosmic journey, Abraham’s emotional responses are not explicitly reported with first-person statements in Recension A, as in most apocalypses. Instead, the narrative simply describes certain features that Abraham observes as “terrifying” (11:4; 12:4[A]). However, Recension B does report Abraham’s fear and marveling (θαυμάζω [9:2-5 {B}]), which are met with reassuring

54. Death is an independent figure in Recension A, but in Recension B, it is merely Michael in disguise.

55. For a detailed discussion of the portrayal of Abraham, see Ludlow, *Abraham Meets Death*, 48–72.

words from Michael. When Abraham sees the judgment of the wicked, he is moved to compassion, and offers supplication to God on their behalf (14:5-6, 10-12[A]; cf. 18:9[A]).

Abraham's emotional and physical humanity are mainly expressed in response to the announcement of his death to him. He weeps when Michael announces his impending death (9:2[A]; he also weeps when he washes Michael's feet in 3:9[A]). Death's ferocity—revealed in 17:9-19[A] and explained in 19:7-20:2[A]—causes Abraham to “enter the depression of death,” which seems to be an emotional condition that is accompanied by physical weakness (17:19; 18:8; 19:2; 20:4-7[A]). In place of the divine restoration that normally mitigates an apocalyptic seer's emotional and physical weakness, Death suggests that Abraham simply submit to his power, so as to receive postmortem restoration: “Come, kiss my right hand, and may cheerfulness and life and strength come to you” (20:8[A]).

Summary

Abraham's cognitive humanity is exhibited in his questions during the cosmic journey and his dialogue with Death. Divine answers to these questions provide Abraham with an understanding of death and the judgment of sinners. In this way, God adjusts Abraham's human point of view regarding the punishment of sinners and the death of the righteous, to some degree. When Abraham sees the place of judgment, he is moved to compassion for those whom he had destroyed, and he offers supplication for their souls. His emotional and physical humanity mainly feature as responses to the ferocity of Death, and therefore constitute part of his own experience of death.

3 Baruch

Cognitive Humanity

Whereas the mode of revelation in *2 Baruch* is visions and dialogue, Baruch is taken on a cosmic journey through the heavens in *3 Baruch*. Baruch's cognitive

humanity is expressed through his questions about nearly everything that he observes. He asks about: the cosmos (3 *Bar.* 2:4; 4:7[G]; 7:1; 8:5[G]; 9:2, 5, 8[G]; 10:4, 7[G], 8; 11:2), the mythical figures linked with various cosmological features (serpent: 4:4; 5:2; phoenix: 6:3, 4, 9, 11, 12, 15; 8:3), other figures whom he sees (2:7; 3:4; 9:4[G]; 11:8; 12:2; 16:5[S]), and noises that he hears (6:13; 11:3; 14:2). Like some other apocalypses containing cosmic journeys, Baruch sees a tree in the Garden of Eden—but not the Tree of Life (cf. *1 En.* 24:4-25:5; *2 En.* 8:3).⁵⁶ Instead, Baruch views the tree that caused Adam to sin, and he asks questions about it (4:6, 9; cf. *1 En.* 32:3-6).⁵⁷ At every point, his questions lead to divine explanations. Through this question and answer dialogue with the angelic mediator, Baruch is given special understanding of the cosmos and the ultimate abodes of the wicked and righteous, so that he might make this information known in the earthly realm (2:4; 17:1[S]).

Interestingly, after Baruch's opening lamentation concerning Jerusalem, the angelic mediator tells him to "[c]ease irritating God [Παῦσον τὸν θεὸν παροξύνειν], and I will disclose to you other mysteries greater than these" (1:6 [G only]). This statement is contextually awkward for a couple of reasons,⁵⁸ but at face value, it apparently regards Baruch's prayer as irritating to God.⁵⁹ In view of the angel's earlier statement in 1:3 [G only]—"Do not concern yourself so much over the salvation of Jerusalem"—the probable reason that Baruch's prayer is irritating to God is because of its concern with Jerusalem. Therefore, 1:3 [G] and 1:6 [G] are likely from the hand of the Christian redactor, and reflect a polemic against Jewish (and

56. Cf. also Rev 22:2; 5 *Ezra* 2:12; *Apoc. El. (C)* 5:6; *Apoc. Sedr.* 4:4; *Gk. Apoc. Ezra* 2:11; 5:21.

57. When Baruch asks to see the tree through which the serpent deceived Adam and Eve (4:8), the angel corrects him, telling him that the tree is actually the vine, from which wine comes (4:8-17).

58. As Gaylord Jr. points out, the salvation of Jerusalem is perhaps the only mystery that has been revealed, which makes the reference to "mysteries greater than these" somewhat awkward (Gaylord Jr., "3 [Greek Apocalypse of] Baruch," 663 n. i). Cf. 3 *Bar.* 2:6; 5:3 (G).

59. παροξύνω usually has a negative connotation in the LXX and Pseudepigrapha (cf. Hos 8:5; Zech 10:3; *Pss. Sol.* 4:21; *T. Sim.* 4:8; *T. Ash.* 2:6; *T. Dan* 4:2).

Christian?) concern for Jerusalem and the temple. This would explain why the concerns that Baruch expresses in 1:1-2 are not taken up in the apocalypse. Baruch's concern for the temple, then, apparently arises from his cognitive humanity, and the remainder of the apocalypse attempts to realign his focus with God's.

Emotional and Physical Humanity

Baruch's physical and emotional humanity do not feature much in the way he is portrayed. Commensurate with the setting of *2 Baruch*, *3 Baruch* opens with Baruch's lamentation over the condition of Jerusalem (1:1-5), which occasions the sole revelatory episode in this apocalypse. In contrast to *2 Baruch*, the revelations granted to Baruch in *3 Baruch* do not address the problem of Jerusalem's destruction. Nonetheless, when the angelic mediator appears to Baruch, his presence has a calming effect upon him (1:6[G]); the angelic mediator does not cause Baruch to be afraid, which is a deviation from the standard response to an angelic epiphany. In fact, Baruch only becomes afraid when he sees the glory of the sun, which causes him to flee for protection into the wings of the angel (8:5[S]; 7:5[G]). Baruch is comforted by reassuring words from the angelic mediator: "Do not fear, Baruch, the Lord is with you, but be comforted" (8:5[S]; cf. 7:6[G]).

Summary

In the Greek version, Baruch's cognitive humanity is exhibited by his misdirected concern with Jerusalem, which is an irritation to God. The remainder of the apocalypse redirects Baruch by disclosing "greater mysteries" to him. In both the Greek and Slavonic versions, Baruch's questions expose his cognitive humanity, and they show his dependency upon divine explanation of nearly everything that he observes. He does not exhibit the typical emotional and physical responses to the opening angelic epiphany. Therefore, his emotional and physical humanity feature only in his lamentation over Jerusalem, and in his fearful response to the glory of the sun.

Revelation

Cognitive Humanity

The book of Revelation is anomalous among the first- and second-century C.E. apocalypses in the way that it almost entirely mutes John's cognitive humanity. In other words, John's cognitive humanity is never exhibited through his questions and pronouncements, and he never asks for an interpretation of what he sees.⁶⁰ However, in place of John's questions, there are questions asked by other beings, which lead to divine explanation. Thus, the martyrs under the altar cry out, "[H]ow long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?" (6:10; cf. *4 Ezra* 4:35-37).⁶¹ In one place, a rhetorical question directed to John stands where one would normally expect John's own question—one of the twenty-four elders asks him about the identity and origin of the multitude in white robes (7:13). After John replies, "Sir, you are the one who knows [κύριέ μου σὺ οἶδας],"⁶² the elder proceeds to identify them as those who have come out of the great tribulation (7:14). John's deflection of the question indicates that he does not know the answer,⁶³ and thus represents one of only a couple instances in the apocalypse where he is explicitly shown to require divine explanation of what he observes. The only other instance is in 17:6-7, where John is astonished after seeing the woman on the beast (Καὶ ἐθαύμασα ἰδὼν αὐτὴν θαῦμα μέγα). The angel, who is apparently surprised by John's astonishment, asks, "Why are you astonished [διὰ τί ἐθαύμασας]? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman..." (17:7). Therefore, we should not conclude that the absence of questions and requests for explanation

60. "One of the distinctive characteristics of Revelation is that the question-and-answer form typical of many Jewish and Christian apocalypses is almost completely missing" (David E. Aune, *Revelation 6–16* [WBC 52b; Dallas: Word, 1998], 473).

61. Similarly, Daniel hears other beings ask questions instead of asking his own (Dan 8:13; 12:6). Cf. also Zech 1:12.

62. Ezekiel replies similarly to a divine question about whether the dry bones can live: אָדָנִי יְהוָה אַתָּה יָדָעָתָּ ; κύριε σὺ ἐπίστη ταῦτα (Ezek 37:3). Cf. also *Herm.* 86:1; *T. Ab.* 8:8-9[B]; Zech 4:5, 13.

63. So Beale, *Revelation*, 432.

indicates that John simply understood what he saw, apart from any divine explanation.⁶⁴ Rather, it seems that John's inquisitiveness has not been included in the presentation of his revelatory episode.⁶⁵

However, there is one feature of the apocalypse that clearly exhibits John's cognitive humanity. At two points, John mistakenly attempts to worship (προσκυνέω) the angelic mediator (19:10; 22:8). In both cases, the angel redirects John's worship to God. This undoubtedly served the rhetorical function of prohibiting angel worship among John's audience,⁶⁶ but it also exhibits the confusion that apocalyptic seers experience, arising from their cognitive humanity, about the identity of various divine beings who inhabit the divine realm (e.g., *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 7:21; 8:4-5; *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:4-5, 14-15; *Herm.* 25:3).

Emotional and Physical Humanity

John's emotional and physical humanity, like his cognitive humanity, are almost entirely muted. Aside from his weeping over the ostensible absence of anyone worthy to open the scroll (5:4), the only other display of his emotional and physical humanity is during his introductory encounter with the exalted Christ (1:10-20). This

64. Although there are several places where John simply explains aspects of the vision to his audience (4:5; 5:6, 8; 15:1; 19:8), these should be understood as resulting from divine interpretations of the visions (as in 1:20), and not John's ability to understand the visions on his own.

65. One can only speculate as to whether the absence of John's questions is the result of a stylistic choice (the seer's questions indeed become cumbersome in some apocalypses [e.g., *3 Bar.*; *Apoc. Ab.*; *Apoc. Zeph.*]), a logistical one (less questions reserves manuscript space for actual revelatory content), or something else (the revelations are thus permitted to remain somewhat veiled to outsiders, which may have been a concern during persecution).

66. Angel veneration or worship was apparently a problem among some of the early Christians (cf. Col 2:18; see Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 1045; cf. also Heb 1:1-2:18). However, Hurtado makes the point that prohibitions of angel veneration in the Jewish and Christian literature may only reflect a polemic against those who privately engaged in such practice; there is no evidence that this took place on a corporate, public scale (Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 34). At a minimum, the early Christians certainly had to articulate the differences between Jesus Christ and the angels (cf. Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008], 141-42). It appears that the apocalypses may have been one of the prime venues for this (e.g., *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 7:21).

epiphany causes John to experience physical debilitation and fear:⁶⁷ “When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead [ὥς νεκρός]” (1:17; cf. *4 Ezra* 10:30; *T. Ab.* 9:1[A]). It is interesting that this response is not recapitulated when John sees God (in some sense) in the heavenly throneroom (4:1-5:14).⁶⁸ Perhaps the reason that John has not reported his own response to the throneroom vision is so that he might highlight the worship carried out by the heavenly retinue, which includes prostration before the throne (4:10; 5:14). John’s fear and debilitation before the exalted Christ are assuaged with reassuring words and a restorative touch: “[H]e placed his right hand on me, saying, ‘Do not be afraid...’” (1:17b). Similarly, John’s weeping is met with comforting words from one of the twenty-four heavenly elders, telling him not to weep, since Jesus is indeed worthy to open the seals (5:5). Therefore, in both places where John’s emotional and physical humanity are displayed, divine beings offer him reassurance and restoration.

Summary

John’s humanity only minimally figures into the apocalypse. Deviating from the genre norm, John’s questions about what is revealed to him are not presented. This is surprising since the other apocalypses produced (or redacted) towards the end of the first century C.E., or in the second century C.E., become increasingly structured around dialogue, which is mainly carried by the seer’s questions. Nevertheless, the data suggest that John still required explanation of what he observed. His cognitive humanity is most pronounced when he attempts to worship the angelic mediator, indicating severe deficiencies in his understanding. John’s emotional and physical humanity are exhibited only twice, but are met with reassurance and restoration both times.

67. The fear is only implied by Jesus’ reassuring words.

68. Cf. the recapitulation of Enoch’s fear and debilitation during his throneroom experience (*2 En.* 20:1; 21:4; 22:5), which he first exhibited during the introductory epiphany (*2 En.* 1:7[J]).

Shepherd of Hermas

Cognitive Humanity

Whereas John's cognitive humanity is almost entirely absent from the book of Revelation, Hermas' cognitive humanity is a central theme of the *Shepherd of Hermas*. During the revelatory episodes, Hermas' cognitive humanity manifests itself in confusion (συγχέω [*Herm.* 25:3-4; 47:2]; ἀπορέω [69:1]), and in his inability to correctly answer questions posed by divine beings (8:1; cf. 86:1). As is normally the case, Hermas asks questions during his dialogues with divine beings,⁶⁹ and he requests explanations of what he observes (e.g., 11:1; 18:9; 82:5; 89:1). He claims that he cannot understand the revelations apart from divine explanation: "I do not understand [οὐ γινώσκω] nor am I able to comprehend [οὐδὲ δύναμαι νοῆσαι] these parables unless you explain [ἐπιλύσης] them to me" (56:1; cf. 30:1; 40:3; 58:4; 62:3; 64:3; 65:1; 86:2; 91:4). Although explanations are granted to him, they are delivered along with insults and upbraiding. For example, he is repeatedly called "foolish [μωρός]" and "void of understanding [ἄσύνετος]" when he asks for explanations of what is revealed to him (e.g., 14:5; 16:9; 40:2; 47:2; 64:3; 65:2; 91:4). Similarly, the divine beings tell him not to ask questions, since they reflect negative character attributes, such as arrogance, shamelessness, slyness, stubbornness, and idle curiosity (cf. 11:2; 57:2; 58:1; 82:5).⁷⁰ According to these divine beings, Hermas' inability to understand the revelations on his own is an effect of his poor spiritual condition, and not simply an intellectual deficiency. Thus, the Shepherd tells him,

[T]hose who are absorbed in these things [i.e., things of the world] do not comprehend [οὐ νοοῦσι] the divine parables, because they are darkened by these matters and are ruined and become barren... For whenever they hear about divine matters and truth, their mind is preoccupied with their own

69. Hermas' questions: 1:5, 6, 7; 8:1, 2; 9:3; 10:1, 3; 11:1, 5; 12:1, 2, 3; 13:3, 4, 5; 14:5, 6; 15:5; 16:6, 9; 18:9; 19:4; 24:1; 29:4; 30:1; 31:1; 32:1; 33:7; 36:2, 5; 37:5; 38:2, 3, 5, 8; 40:2; 42:3; 43:7, 19; 44:3; 46:1; 48:1; 51:3, 4, 5; 52:2; 54:3; 57:1; 58:5; 59:1; 62:3; 63:2, 4; 64:1; 65:5; 66:3; 68:6; 69:5, 6; 72:2, 3; 82:2, 3; 84:4, 5; 86:3; 87:5, 6; 88:1, 3; 89:1, 2, 5; 90:1, 2, 3, 6; 91:1, 4; 92:1, 4, 5; 93:1, 5; 94:1, 2, 3; 95:1, 5; 96:3; 105:3; 106:4.

70. Yet, at the conclusion of their dialogue, the Shepherd points out, somewhat comically, that Hermas has forgotten to ask him a question about the stones (110:2).

affairs, and they understand nothing at all [οὐδὲν ὅλως νοοῦσιν]. But those who fear God and inquire about divine matters and truth and direct their heart to the Lord grasp more quickly [τάχιον νοοῦσι] and understand [συνίουσιν] everything that is said to them, because they have the fear of the Lord in themselves; for where the Lord lives, there is also much understanding [σύνεσις]. So hold fast to the Lord and you will understand and grasp everything [καὶ πάντα συνήσεις καὶ νοήσεις] (40:4-6).

Furthermore, according to the Shepherd, Hermas should have requested explanations from God rather than from angels: “Those... who are servants of God and have their own Lord in their heart ask for understanding [σύνεσιν] from him and receive it, and so they interpret [ἐπιλύει] every parable, and the words of the Lord spoken in parables are made known [γνωστὰ αὐτῷ γίνονται] to them” (57:3; cf. 79:6-7). Therefore, Hermas’ inability to understand on his own arises from his ostensibly poor spiritual condition, but also from his misguided pursuit of understanding.

Emotional and Physical Humanity

Hermas experiences several of the standard emotional responses exhibited by other apocalyptic seers. What he observes causes him to be amazed (ἤκουσα μέγας καὶ θαυμαστῶς [3:3]; ἐθαύμαζον [67:4]; με θαυμάζειν [79:2]) and astonished (ἐκθαμβος ἐγενόμην [9:5]); at other points, he is saddened (9:8), and he weeps (2:1-2; 22:7; 28:3). He describes some of the revelations as “terrifying” (τὰ ῥήματα ἐκφρικτα [3:3]), and he reports fear (9:5; 24:7; 25:4; 47:1; 62:5). Interestingly, Hermas’ physical humanity does not feature prominently in any of his encounters with divine beings, even when he reports intense fear. In other words, he does not experience the dramatic physical debilitation that is so common in the apocalypses. Yet, he still reports deficient strength in a couple of places, which prevents him from being able to remember certain revelations (3:3) and renders him unfit to receive an angelic explanation to one of his visions (78:1-2). Hermas’ emotional responses and physical deficiencies are not directly mitigated by reassuring

words and restorative touches, as is normally the case in apocalypses.⁷¹ Instead, Hermas reassures himself at points, which is an interesting development of the *divine reassurance and restoration* motif (9:5; 22:7-8).

Summary

More than any other apocalyptic seer, Hermas is utterly dependent upon divine explanation in order to understand the significance of what is revealed to him. Even though this is normally the case in texts conforming to the apocalypse genre, the *Shepherd of Hermas* is the only apocalypse that casts the seer's imperception in a negative light. This serves the apocalypse's larger purpose of constructing a theology of 'understanding'. In other words, Hermas' impudence, and his dependency upon divine beings for explanation, leads to the teaching that Christians who are single-mindedly focused on God receive the explanation of divine matters from him, through prayer. Similarly, the antagonistic tone directed towards Hermas also contributes to the didactic aims of the apocalypse, since he, as one who is "double-minded" (διψυχέω [11:4; 22:4; 61:2]; δίψυχος [47:2; 50:3]),⁷² is so much like the text's wider audience:

It is not because you are worthier than all others to have it revealed to you, for others are before you and are better than you, to whom these visions ought to have been revealed. But it has been revealed to you in order that the name of God might be glorified, and it will be revealed for the sake of the double-minded [διψύχους], who question in their hearts whether or not these things are so. Tell them that these things are true, and that there is nothing besides the truth, but all are powerful and reliable and firmly established (12:3).

Through the divine antagonism expressed towards Hermas, then, the terminal audience is made aware of their own faults and exhorted to have faith.⁷³

71. There are only a couple of instances that come close to this, where divine beings do offer some encouragement and consolation (25:5; 47:1; 78:2).

72. For a discussion of how double-mindedness contributes to the theological character of the text, see Osiek, *Shepherd of Hermas*, 30–31.

73. Cf. Norbert Brox, *Der Hirt des Hermas* (Kommentar zu den apostolischen Vätern; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 16–19.

Hermas' emotional and physical humanity is mainly typical of apocalyptic seers, though he does not display the debilitation normally present during encounters with divine beings.

Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah

Cognitive Humanity

Isaiah's cognitive humanity is mainly expressed through his questions about what he observes during his spiritual ascent through the seven heavens (*Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 7:11, 16; 8:4, 6; 9:3, 11, 20, 25). These questions are followed by divine explanations of the heavenly realm. However, like John in the book of Revelation, Isaiah attempts to worship an angelic being, and must be prevented from doing so (7:21; cf. 9:31; Rev 19:10; 22:8; *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:4-7, 13-14).⁷⁴ Here also, this exhibits the seer's confusion about the identity of the various divine beings whom he encounters. In conjunction with the most important content that is revealed to Isaiah—i.e., that Christ appears in the same form as those who occupy each of the realms through which he descends and ascends—the angelic mediator commands Isaiah to “understand” what he observes: “Understand, Isaiah, and look, that you may see the transformation and descent of the LORD” (10:18; cf. 11:1, 22). Thus, as Isaiah observes the descent and ascent of this heavenly figure, he understands his identity and significance.

Emotional and Physical Humanity

Isaiah experiences several of the standard emotional responses of apocalyptic seers during his revelatory episode. He rejoices when his angelic mediator deals kindly with him (7:6), and when he learns of the glorious abode of the righteous (7:23). On the other hand, he is sad when he is not permitted to remain in heaven

74. On the significance of this passage as it relates to Isaiah's ascent to the divine council, see Martha Himmelfarb, “The Experience of the Visionary and Genre in the Ascension of Isaiah 6–11 and the Apocalypse of Paul,” *Semeia* 36 (1986): esp. 98–101.

permanently, but is told that he must return to his body of flesh (8:28). He is physically weak in the presence of the angelic mediator, and he must rely on divinely supplied strength in order to speak (7:3); likewise, he is given strength in order to sing praises along with the heavenly retinue (8:13). As is typical in ascents, Isaiah exhibits fear and trembling when he arrives at the seventh heaven (9:1-2); however, the source of his fear seems to be a voice questioning how far he is permitted to ascend, rather than the appearance of the throneroom. Only once does the angelic mediator offer reassuring words (8:28), and the apocalypse contains no overt instance of restorative touches (though this may be implied in 7:3 and 8:13).

Summary

In sum, Isaiah's cognitive humanity is expressed through his questions and in his confused worship of a divine being. Angelic answers to his questions, and explanations of his visions, enable Isaiah to perceive the significance of what he observes during his revelatory episode. Because of the explanatory comments of his angelic mediator, Isaiah is able to understand that he has observed the descent and ascent of the Lord. His emotional and physical humanity are typical of apocalyptic seers, but they do not occur with the same severity as in some other apocalypses. This may be an effect of Isaiah's explicitly non-bodily ascent (11:34-35).

Apocalypse of Zephaniah

Cognitive Humanity

During Zephaniah's cosmic journey, which includes a descent to Hades and an ascent through the heavens, he must continually ask the angelic mediator questions about what he observes. He asks about: the identity and nature of various beings whom he encounters (*Apoc. Zeph.* B:5 [Sahidic frag.]; 3:3, 6; 4:5; 6:17; 10:5, 7, 9; 11:3 [Akhmim Text]); the workings and locations of the cosmos (2:6; 6:16); whether those in Hades may repent (10:10); how long they have for repentance

(10:11); what kind of bodies they have (10:13); and why the angel has not permitted him to see everything (12:4). The angelic mediator's answers to these questions enable Zephaniah to achieve an understanding of what he observes. Zephaniah's cognitive humanity is exhibited most clearly when he confuses the angel Eremiel for the Lord Almighty, and so attempts to worship him, displaying the confusion that apocalyptic seers often experience concerning the identity of divine beings (6:4-7, 13-14; cf., Rev 19:10; 22:8-9; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 7:21).

Emotional and Physical Humanity

Zephaniah exhibits several different responses, which vividly portray his humanity as it interfaces with the divine realm. After seeing Hades and some of its residents, Zephaniah recounts that he was "amazed" (10:8). Zephaniah is "afraid" when he thinks that he is in the presence of the Lord (6:6), when encountered by the accuser (6:9), and when he sees the soul being tormented (Sahidic fragment B:3). However, fear is not the only response of Zephaniah in the presence of otherworldly beings. For example, after seeing the accuser and responding with fear (6:9), Zephaniah sees another angel (whom he initially thinks is the Lord Almighty), which evokes a joyful response from him, since he thinks that this second angel has come to save him from the accuser (6:13). At a couple of points, Zephaniah's fear is accompanied by physical debilitation (Sahidic frag. B:3; 6:9-10); only in the Sahidic fragment does the angelic mediator supply physical restoration following his debilitation (B:4). Even so, the mediating angel does ameliorate Zephaniah's fear with comforting words at points (4:9-10; 7:9). Unfortunately, the present form of the text does not preserve Zephaniah's response to the introductory epiphany, nor does it preserve his responses to the revelation which were likely described in association with his return to a normal state of consciousness.

Summary

Zephaniah's cognitive humanity is expressed through his questions

concerning what he observes, and in his confused attempt to worship the angel Eremiel. Angelic answers to his questions move him past the limits of his cognitive humanity, thereby enabling him to understand what he observes. His emotional and physical humanity are exhibited in the standard responses of amazement, joy, fear, and debilitation. His adverse responses of fear and debilitation are assuaged by divine words of reassurance, and, in one place, physical restoration.

Conclusions

The preceding analysis has confirmed that the humanity of apocalyptic seers is a key component of their portrayals in the apocalypse genre. Of the data sample, only *Jubilees* does not exhibit the seer's humanity. This is not at all surprising since *Jub.* 23 is the only portion of the text regularly identified as an apocalypse, with the rest of the text falling into other genre classifications.⁷⁵

1. In thirteen of the fourteen texts considered in the data sample (i.e., all but *Jub.*), the cognitive humanity of the apocalyptic seer is exhibited in his dependency upon divine explanation in order to comprehend the divine realm.

- In the texts that involve a cosmic journey (i.e., *1 En.*; *T. Levi*; *2 En.*; *Apoc. Ab.*; *T. Ab.*; *3 Bar.*; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.*; *Apoc. Zeph.*), divine explanations normally follow the seer's questions, which express the limitations of his cognitive humanity as he encounters the mysteries and beings of the divine realm. In the texts that do not include a cosmic journey (i.e., *Dan*; *4 Ezra*; *2 Bar.*; *Rev*; *Herm.*), the seer requires divine explanation of visions, and his cognitive humanity is expressed through questions about the visions, or in questions during dialogue with a divine being. In the book of Revelation, however, John does not ask any questions; questions asked by

75. Cf. John J. Collins, "Jewish Apocalypses," 24, 32–33.

others seem to stand in place of his own. Although human questions voiced during revelatory episodes are not found exclusively in the apocalypses,⁷⁶ the apocalypses appear to be the first genre in which these become a fairly standard feature of revelatory dialogue.

- In four of the fourteen apocalypses (i.e., *1 En.*; *2 En.*; *4 Ezra*; *2 Bar.*), the cognitive humanity of the seer is expressed through pronouncements, which reflect a human point of view on divine mysteries and lead to divine explanation.

2. In addition to the seer's normal dependency upon divine explanation of the divine realm, most of the apocalypses also emphasize the seer's cognitive humanity in other ways (*Dan*; *4 Ezra*; *2 Bar.*; *3 Bar.*; *Apoc. Ab.*; *T. Ab.*; *Rev*; *Herm.*; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.*; *Apoc. Zeph.*).

- In three texts (i.e., *Dan*; *Apoc. Ab.*; *Herm.*), the seer expresses deficiencies in his understanding, even after hearing extensive explanation of the revealed mysteries. Especially in the book of Daniel, this results in some uncertainty regarding whether the seer completely understood the revelations. This uncertainty is not designed to reflect negatively on the seer; rather, the deficiencies in the seer's understanding seem to emphasize a fundamental duality between the divine and human realms, which renders humans incapable of fully comprehending divine mysteries, sometimes even after they have been explained.
- In *4 Ezra*, this duality between the divine and human realms becomes the specific topic of Ezra's dialogues with the angelic mediator. Despite the

76. The seer's questions, which become such a fixed feature of the apocalypse genre, likely stand as a development of many streams of tradition depicting human encounters with the divine (cf. patriarchal visions [e.g., Gen 15:2, 8]; prophetic questions [e.g., Hab 1:1-4; 1:12-2:1; esp. Zech 1:9, 19, 21; 2:2; 4:4, 12; 5:6, 10; 6:4]; and questions of theodicy in wisdom traditions [e.g., Job chs. 6-7, *passim*]).

angel's position that humans cannot understand heavenly matters (i.e., God's judgment), Ezra nevertheless receives extensive disclosure of divine mysteries, which, he argues, are supremely relevant for the realm of humanity. Moreover, Ezra's incorrect opinions about the justice of God highlight his cognitive humanity. The revelations delivered to him are intended to correct his wrong opinions, which arise from his limited humanity. Likewise, in *2 Baruch*, Baruch's cognitive humanity is featured in an incorrect opinion concerning God's judgment, and in his inability to understand why the righteous die. As with Ezra, the revelations granted to him have a reorienting effect, causing him to view these matters from a divine perspective. Again, in the *Testament of Abraham* [A], Abraham's harshness towards sinners is adjusted by the revelations granted to him, which disclose the fate of the wicked after death, causing him to compassionately intercede for them. Therefore, these three first- and second century C.E. apocalypses may mark a trend in the genre, wherein the apocalyptic seer expresses opinions and convictions that the revelation itself corrects.

- Occasionally, divine beings seem surprised by the seer's inquisitiveness, or that the seer requires explanation of a particular point. For example, the angelic mediator asks Enoch, "What is it that you are asking me concerning the fragrance of this tree and you are so inquisitive about?" (*I En.* 25:1; cf. 21:5). John's angelic mediator asks him, "Why are you astonished?" (*Rev* 17:7). When Abraham asks about the identity of a being associated with the judgment, the angel replies, "Do you not know who he is [Οὐκ ἔγνως αὐτὸν τίς ἐστίν]?" (*T. Ab.* 8:8 [B]; cf. 8:9 [A]). Similarly, after Hermas has incorrectly identified the Shepherd, the Shepherd asks him, "Do you not recognize me [Οὐκ ἐπινώσκεις με]?" (*Herm.* 25:3).

Perhaps these instances of angelic surprise at the seer's cognitive humanity are echoes of similar angelic responses during Zechariah's visions: "Do you not know what these are?" (הלוא ידעת מה־המה אלה; οὐ γινώσκεις τί ἐστὶν ταῦτα [Zech 4:5]; הלוא ידעת מה־אלה; οὐκ οἶδας τί ἐστὶν ταῦτα [Zech 4:13]; cf. also Ezek 17:12).

- In three of the apocalypses (i.e., *4 Ezra*; *3 Bar.*; *Herm.*), the angels are not just surprised by the seer's inquisitiveness, but they take a somewhat antagonistic tone towards it. Thus, at several points, Ezra is told not to ask any more questions about particular topics (*4 Ezra* 8:55; 9:13; cf. 6:10). Following Baruch's questions about why God has allowed Jerusalem to be plundered, the angelic mediator tells him to "cease irritating God" (*3 Bar.* 1:6 [G]). Not only is Hermas frequently told to desist from asking more questions (e.g., *Herm.* 21:4), but his questions often anger the divine mediators (e.g., 14:5; 58:1). This is an effect of the text's teaching that those who are not double-minded (or doubting) receive explanation directly from God through prayer. To a large degree, then, the *Shepherd of Hermas* attempts to supplant the traditional mode of apocalyptic revelation and reorganize it in a distinctively Christian scheme. Aside from these relatively rare instances, divine mediators assume that the human seer will require explanation of divine mysteries, and they willingly serve in this mediating capacity. Yet, these three apocalypses may also document a trend of 'angelic antagonism' developing in the first- and second century C.E.
- In three apocalypses (i.e., *Rev*; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.*; *Apoc. Zeph.*), the seer's cognitive humanity results in misdirected worship of divine beings. John must twice be told not to worship the angelic mediator; Isaiah is told not to worship the angels in the first six heavens, but to worship the LORD in the

seventh heaven; Zephaniah mistakenly worships an angel, whom he thinks is the LORD. Since the seer's misdirected worship is found only in apocalypses dating from the first century C.E. and later, it appears to be a relatively late development in the genre. Additionally, since it appears in two Christian apocalypses (either Christian in authorship [Rev], or exhibiting heavy Christian redaction [*Mart. Ascen. Isa.*]), it is reasonable to conclude that the seer's confusion, resulting in misdirected worship, was a Christian development in the standard genre portrayal of apocalyptic seers, which may have functioned to clearly distinguish the Lord Jesus from the angels in early Christology.⁷⁷ However, the fact that the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* does not exhibit any Christian redaction,⁷⁸ yet includes the seer's misdirected worship, militates against holding this conclusion too firmly.

3. Apocalyptic seers exhibit a range of emotional responses to the divine realm. By far, the most regular emotion is fear, which is almost always coupled with physical debilitation. Of course, this is not unique to the apocalypse genre, having precedent in both the patriarchal narratives and prophetic literature.⁷⁹

77. In connection with this, the attempted worship of Paul and Barnabas in Acts 14:8-20 illustrates how easily ontological categories could become blurred among Gentile audiences (cf. also Acts 12:22). Therefore, it is not surprising that Christian apocalypses would explicitly distinguish angelic beings from Jesus.

78. Wintermute, "Apocalypse of Zephaniah," 501.

79. Fear—Gen 15:1; 21:17; 26:24; 28:17; Exod 3:6; Judg 6:22-23; Job 4:12-15; 7:14; Isa 6:5; Hab 3:16. The human reaction of fear is often not described, but is only implied in the divine injunction, "do not fear" (אל־תִּירָא; μή φοβῆσθαι). Sometimes, the injunction, "do not fear," assuages fear caused by something other than the divine encounter itself (e.g., Gen 46:3; Ezek 2:6 [3x]; 3:9). Prostration—Gen 17:3, 17; Deut 9:18, 25; Num 20:6; 22:31; Josh 5:14; Judg 13:20. Prostration, from which debilitation in the apocalypses developed, was probably a normal prophetic posture. It is listed as one of the characteristics which identify Balaam as a prophet (Num 24:4, 16; cf. 20:6), but it figures prominently only in Ezekiel's prophetic call and visions (Ezek 1:28; 3:23; 43:3; 44:4). Cf. also Isaiah's cognitive and emotional humanity in Isa 21:3-4.

- In four texts (i.e., *Dan*; *2 En.*; *Apoc. Ab.*; *Rev*), the seer experiences fear and debilitation in response to the epiphany of his angelic mediator.
- In four of the texts that include a cosmic journey (i.e., *1 En.*; *2 En.*; *Apoc. Ab.*; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.*), the seer experiences fear and debilitation when he arrives at the heavenly throneroom.
- In four texts (i.e., *4 Ezra*; *3 Bar.*; *Apoc. Zeph.*; *T. Ab.*), the seer's fear and debilitation occurs neither in response to the angelic mediator, nor the heavenly throneroom. Instead, it is his reaction to the content of the vision itself.
- Regardless of the context in which the seer experiences fear and debilitation, this reaction is normally met with reassuring words and restorative touches from a divine being. The seer's dependency upon divine reassurance and restoration is an effect of, and feeds into, the cosmological and ontological duality between humanity and the divine realm.
- Revelatory episodes are also frequently preceded or followed by reports about the seer's emotional and physical condition (e.g., *Dan*; *1 En.*; *T. Levi*; *2 En.*; *4 Ezra*; *2 Bar.*; *3 Bar.*; *Rev*; *Herm.*).
- Amazement is the second most common expression of the seer's emotional humanity, occurring in seven texts (i.e., *Dan* [Th.]; *1 En.*; *T. Levi*; *T. Ab.*; *Rev*; *Herm.*; *Apoc. Zeph.*).

In sum, the cognitive humanity of apocalyptic seers renders them incapable of understanding the mysteries that are revealed to them, apart from divine explanation. The emotional and physical humanity of apocalyptic seers emphasizes the contrast between the heavenly realm and the normal realm of humanity.

CHAPTER 5

PETER AND THE DISCIPLES AS APOCALYPTIC SEERS IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Introduction

In Part 1, we identified features of the apocalypses that support the portrayal of apocalyptic seers as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries (ch. 3), and as humans encountering the divine realm (ch. 4). The present chapter argues that these two aspects of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers have influenced the portrayal of Peter in Matthew's main source, Mark's Gospel. This influence is detected in connection with Mark's presentation of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation, on the one hand, and his presentation of Jesus' messianic identity and mode, on the other:

1. Jesus' Enigmatic Proclamation: The portrayal of apocalyptic seers as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, and as humans encountering the divine realm, has shaped Mark's portrayal of Peter in connection with Jesus' enigmatic proclamation. Peter, as one among the group of disciples, is portrayed as an exclusive recipient of the mystery of the kingdom of God, which is granted to him through Jesus' explanations of his enigmatic proclamation. Peter's cognitive humanity prevents him from perceiving the significance of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation apart from explanations of it. As a result of Jesus' explanations, Peter moves past the limits of his cognitive humanity, thereby achieving a degree of understanding.

2. Jesus' Messianic Identity and Mode: The portrayal of apocalyptic seers as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, and as humans encountering the divine realm, has shaped Mark's portrayal of Peter in connection with Jesus' messianic identity and mode. Peter is portrayed as having exclusive insight into Jesus' true identity as the Messiah. However, on account of his cognitive humanity, he has a distinctively human understanding of the mode in which Jesus is the Messiah. Peter's human point of view is recalibrated through the transfiguration and exclusive teaching concerning Jesus' fate as the Son of Man. At points, Peter's emotional and physical humanity come to the fore as well.

The following discussion will be organized around these two aspects of Mark's Gospel.

It is important at this point to reiterate the methodology discussed in ch. 2. As a result of the unique focus of this study—to determine the influence of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers on the portrayal of Peter—the following discussion considers in detail only those passages where this influence is detected, regardless of whether Peter has special prominence among the groups of disciples to which he belongs.

Jesus' Enigmatic Proclamation

In Part 1, we observed that apocalyptic seers are portrayed as the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries. The seer's exclusivity is asserted through features such as exclusionary statements, narrative isolation, and dissemination details. Mark utilized these same features to portray the disciples as exclusive recipients of a revealed mystery—the mystery of the kingdom of God. However, this mystery is not revealed through the cosmic journeys and visions that are the normal mode of revelation in the apocalypses, but through Jesus' explanations of his enigmatic proclamation. Despite this different mode of revelation, the disciples exhibit the same cognitive humanity when confronted with Jesus' enigmatic proclamation that apocalyptic seers exhibit during their encounters with the divine realm. As we shall see, throughout Mark's presentation of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation, the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has mainly shaped Mark's portrayal of the disciples as a unit, with very little special focus on Peter.

Mark introduces τὸ μυστήριον...τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ in conjunction with his introduction of Jesus' parabolic teaching in 4:1-34.¹

The Revelatory Paradigm of Jesus' Enigmatic Proclamation in Mark 4

After an overview of Jesus' Galilean ministry (1:14-3:34), the narrative reports that Jesus taught many things in parables to the large crowd that had gathered

1. However, Jesus does speak in parables prior to ch. 4 (cf. 3:23).

by the lake (ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς ἐν παραβολαῖς πολλά [4:2]). This report is then followed by a presentation of five parables (i.e., the Parable of the Sower [4:3-9]; the Lamp [4:21-23]; the Measure [4:24-25]; the Growing Seed [4:26-29]; the Mustard Seed [4:30-32]) that are representative of Jesus' wider parabolic teaching.² The purpose of the narrative at this point is not simply to present a collection of Jesus' parabolic teaching so as to expose the readership to the details of what he taught in the synagogues and elsewhere.³ Instead, its primary purpose is to establish the *revelatory significance* of Jesus' teaching in parables, and to specifically identify those who were granted access to the revelatory content conveyed through them. In other words, the purpose of this focused presentation of Jesus' parables is to establish that they communicated, in veiled form, the mystery of the kingdom of God, and that this mystery was exclusively revealed to Jesus' disciples.⁴ The narrative accomplishes this purpose through several of the same features that are found in the apocalypses.

Exclusive Recipients of the Mystery of the Kingdom of God.

This section of the narrative (i.e., 4:1-34) includes two exclusionary statements—one uttered by Jesus, the other a narratorial comment—which emphasize that the disciples (i.e., the Twelve and the others around Jesus [cf. 4:10]) are the exclusive recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God, in contradistinction to the crowd. The first exclusionary statement follows Jesus' public

2. Cf. 4:33-34. Burkill detects only three parables in this section (i.e., vv. 3-8; vv. 26-29; vv. 30-32), but also concludes that they "are not intended to give an exhaustive account of the teaching, but are presented as particular illustrations of its general character" (T. A. Burkill, "The Cryptology of Parables in St. Mark's Gospel," *NovT* 1 [1956]: 246).

3. Reports of Jesus' public teaching are frequent throughout the gospel (e.g., 1:21-22; 2:13; 6:2, 6, 34). Yet, the detailed content of his public teaching is not regularly provided until the conflict with the Jewish leadership intensifies as Jesus enters Judea and approaches the Jerusalem phase of his ministry (e.g., 10:1ff.; 11:17; 12:1ff.). Therefore, 4:1ff. stands as the only detailed presentation of Jesus' public teaching during his Galilean ministry.

4. Concerning the rhetorical impact of this for Mark's audience, see Stephen P. Ahearne-Kroll, "Audience Inclusion and Exclusion as Rhetorical Technique in the Gospel of Mark," *JBL* 129 (2010): 717-35.

presentation of the Parable of the Sower to the crowd that had gathered by the Sea of Galilee. When the disciples approach Jesus and ask him about the parables (4:10), he tells them, “To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God [ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον δέδοται τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ], but to those outside, everything is in parables [ἐκείνοις δὲ τοῖς ἔξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα γίνεται]” (4:11). With this statement, Jesus clearly indicates that, although his teaching in parables is broadcast widely to the large crowds that constantly followed him,⁵ the mystery of God’s kingdom is exclusively granted to the disciples; it remains veiled in parabolic form to all others.⁶ The following context clarifies that this mystery is granted to the disciples *through Jesus’ explanations of the parables*,⁷ which he exclusively delivers to them.⁸ This is the point of the second exclusionary statement, which stands as the concluding summary of this narrative section: “With many such parables [τοιαύταις παραβολαῖς πολλαῖς] he spoke the word to them [i.e., the crowd (4:1)] “those outside” (4:11)], as they were able to hear it [καθὼς ἠδύναντο ἀκούειν];⁹ he did not speak to

5. The crowds are constantly pursuing Jesus before this exclusionary statement (cf. 1:33, 37, 45; 2:2, 4, 13; 3:7-10, 20, 32; 4:1) and after it (4:36; 5:14, 21, 24, 31; 6:31, 33, 54-56; 7:14; 8:1, 34; 9:14-15, 25; 10:1, 46; 11:18; 12:12, 37).

6. See the discussion in Joel Marcus, *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God* (SBLDS 90; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 45–46 concerning the presence of the mystery of the kingdom of God *in the parables*, even before they are explained to the disciples.

7. So J. Arthur Baird, “A Pragmatic Approach to Parable Exegesis: Some New Evidence on Mark 4:11, 33–34,” *JBL* 76 (1957): 202; contra Räisänen, who says, “In 4:11, the Markan Jesus tells his disciples that the secret of the kingdom of God has been ‘given’ to them. But when, and how? There is no indication of that in the gospel (nor, for that matter, does Mark reveal what the secret actually comprises)” (Heikki Räisänen, *The ‘Messianic Secret’ in Mark* [trans. Christopher Tuckett; Studies of the New Testament and Its World; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990], 17). For the equation of *an explanation* with a mystery, see Dan 2:30; Rev 1:20.

8. Cf. Seán Freyne, “The Disciples in Mark and the Maskilim in Daniel: A Comparison,” *JSNT* 5 (1982): 15.

9. Although Collins translates this phrase as, “to the degree that they were able to hear,” she interprets ἀκούειν as signifying some degree of understanding, not just exposure or hearing (Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007], 239–40; also Schuyler Brown, “‘The Secret of the Kingdom of God’ [Mark 4:11],” *JBL* 92 [1973]: 65; Suzanne Watts Henderson, *Christology and Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark* [SNTSMS 135; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006], 133). This confuses Mark’s explicit distinction between ‘hearing’, which is associated with exposure to Jesus’ parables, and ‘understanding’ or ‘perceiving’, which is associated with Jesus’ private explanation of the parables to his disciples (cf. 4:12b, where the quotation of Isa 6:9 associates the lexeme ἀκούω with imperception/obduracy, as distinct from συνίμι, which is associated with perception/responsiveness; cf. also 4:13, 34).

them without a parable [χωρίς δὲ παραβολῆς οὐκ ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς], but he explained everything in private to his own disciples [κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς ἰδίοις μαθηταῖς ἐπέλυνεν πάντα]” (4:33-34). This second exclusionary statement operates in tandem with the first to clearly assert that the disciples, in contradistinction to the crowd, are the exclusive recipients of Jesus’ explanations of his parables, which disclose to them the mystery of the kingdom of God.¹⁰ Therefore, just as exclusionary statements in the apocalypses are utilized to portray the seer as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries, the exclusionary statements of 4:11, 34 support Mark’s portrayal of the disciples as the exclusive recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God.¹¹

As these exclusionary statements indicate, the disciples’ status as exclusive recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God, which is based on their privileged reception of Jesus’ explanations, is closely associated with their proximity to Jesus in private settings.¹² Thus, in the first exclusionary statement, Jesus distinguishes the

10. Although the mystery of the kingdom of God is related to the mystery of Jesus’ identity in some sense, we generally agree with Brown’s assessment that mystery of Jesus’ identity (i.e., Wrede’s messianic secret) should be distinguished from the mystery of the kingdom of God, which is disclosed to the disciples through explained parables: “The first indication that Mark intended to distinguish between the content of the messianic secret and of the secret of the kingdom of God is seen in the fact that the disciples only grasp the former (8:29) four chapters after the latter has been ‘given’ to them (4:11)” (Schuyler Brown, “‘The Secret of the Kingdom of God’ [Mark 4:11],” 61; cf. D. J. Hawkin, “The Incomprehension of the Disciples in the Markan Redaction,” *JBL* 91 [1972]: 497; contra Burkill, “Cryptology,” 250–51).

11. Based on the parables in 4:1-34, it seems that the mystery of the kingdom of God is identified very closely with information about how that kingdom arrives or is manifest. This content accords more with the eschatological mysteries that are found in the apocalypses than it does with “the saving truth of the gospel,” as Burkill suggests (*Ibid.*, 249, 251). Moreover, this manifold sense of the ‘mystery of the kingdom of God’ is different than the singular sense advocated by Joachim Jeremias, *The Parable of Jesus* (2nd rev. ed.; New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1972), 16, who understands the singular ‘mystery’ in a strict singular sense, as the recognition of the kingdom’s present arrival, not anything that is communicated in the parables themselves. This interpretation allows him to discredit the idea that 4:11 justifies allegorical interpretations of the parables themselves (*Ibid.*, 18).

12. In her discussion of “Discipleship as Presence in 4:1-34,” Henderson, *Christology*, 97–135 minimizes the revelatory significance that Mark assigns to the disciples’ private interaction with Jesus, since she understands the mystery of the kingdom as something that is disclosed through parables, not necessarily their interpretations (*Ibid.*, 104). Klauck notes that the solitude that the disciples enjoy with Jesus is related to their calling: “Die Berufung schließt bereits eine *Aussonderung* ein. Doch wird dieses Motiv erzählerisch noch in Richtung auf Esoterik und Separation hin ausgebaut” (Hans-Josef Klauck, “Die erzählerische Rolle der Jünger im Markusevangelium: Eine narrative Analyse,” *NovT* 24 [1982]: 8). Klauck proceeds to state that

disciples from “those outside [ἐκείνοις... τοῖς ἔξω]” (4:11). Although this identification of some as ‘outsiders’ perhaps reflects the sociological distinctions made by early Christian communities with reference to those who were not converts,¹³ at the level of Mark’s narrative it refers to those who were excluded from the private settings in which Jesus explained the parables to his disciples—i.e., the crowd. Thus, it reflects a spatial distinction that has revelatory implications. The setting details in 4:10 corroborate this, since they specifically indicate that Jesus was alone, apart from the crowd (cf. 4:1), when his disciples asked him about the parables: “When he was alone [Καὶ ὅτε ἐγένετο κατὰ μόνας], those who were around him along with the twelve asked him about the parables.” This spatial distinction between the disciples and the ‘outsiders’ is reinforced in the second exclusionary statement: “[H]e did not speak to them [i.e., the crowd] without a parable, but he explained everything in private [κατ’ ἰδίαν] to his own disciples” (4:34).¹⁴ Therefore, the disciples are portrayed as receiving disclosures of the mystery of the kingdom of God through Jesus’ explanations of parables, while isolated from the crowd. Their private interaction with Jesus is thus construed as revelatory interaction.¹⁵ Both exclusionary statements and narrative isolation—features that support the exclusivity of apocalyptic seers in the apocalypse genre—are deployed in 4:1-34 to portray the disciples as exclusive recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God.

Parables and Cognitive Humanity.

Part 1 determined that apocalyptic seers are regularly portrayed as exhibiting their cognitive humanity when encountering the mysteries of the divine realm. When the primary mode of revelation is a vision, the apocalyptic seer is incapable of

teaching is the predominant purpose of their solitude with Jesus (Ibid., 9).

13. E.g., 1 Cor 5:12; Col 4:5; 1 Thess 4:12. On the sociological implications of this reference to ‘outsiders’ in Mark 4:11, see the comments of Marcus, *Mystery*, 93–96; Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 495–96.

14. Cf. Ahearne-Kroll, “Audience,” 23.

15. Cf. William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 173.

understanding the significance of the veiled presentation of divine mysteries apart from divine explanation.¹⁶ Likewise, the disciples' cognitive humanity features rather prominently when exposed to Jesus' parables, which communicate the mystery of the kingdom of God in veiled form. Like the 'outsiders', to whom the parables are directed, the disciples are unable to understand the significance of Jesus' parabolic teaching on their own, as a result of their cognitive humanity.¹⁷ It is only through Jesus' private explanations, to which the disciples alone are privileged, that they overcome their cognitive humanity and achieve an understanding of his enigmatic proclamation.¹⁸

After hearing Jesus' parabolic teaching, the disciples ask Jesus about the parables (ἡρώτων αὐτὸν οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν σὺν τοῖς δώδεκα τὰς παραβολὰς [4:10]).¹⁹ Jesus' response in 4:11-13 indicates that their inquisitiveness was concerned with both the reason for his parabolic teaching²⁰ and the interpretations of parables. Although Jesus focuses singularly on the interpretation of the Parable of the Sower in the immediately following context, this should not lead to the conclusion that this is the only parable for which the disciples requested an interpretation. Indeed, Mark's concluding statement in 4:34 indicates as much: "he explained everything [ἐπέλυνεν πάντα] in private to his disciples." Therefore, just as 4:2 says that Jesus taught many

16. E.g., Dan 7:16a, 19-20; 8:15; 4 Ezra 10:30, 35, 37; 12:3-9; 13:14-15; 2 Bar. 38:3; 54:6, 20; Herm. 11:1; 18:9; 82:5; 89:1.

17. "Careful reading shows...that the passage is not only about parables but also about the necessity for the Twelve's understanding the parables and their difficulty in doing so" (Larry W. Hurtado, *Mark* [Good News Commentary; San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983], 57).

18. So Burkill, "Cryptology," 249.

19. There are variants with singular readings here: τὴν παραβολὴν (A^f 1 M^g v^g el^l sy^{p,h} bo^{ms}); τις ἡ παραβολὴ αὕτη (D W Θ f¹³ 28. 565. 2542 it; Or^{lat}). These singular readings are most likely attempts to harmonize the disciples' question with Jesus' response to their question in 4:13a (οὐκ οἶδατε τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην). Although the singular reading is certainly plausible on both external and internal grounds, the plural reading is to be preferred, since it does sit somewhat awkwardly with Jesus' response in 4:13a, but it agrees with the plural references to parables in 4:2, 11, 33. It also has strong external support in the ms tradition.

20. This is apparently how Matthew interpreted their question (Matt 13:10), but Luke presents the question as being concerned only with the meaning of the Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:9).

things in *parables* to the crowd while in the boat, but only the Parable of the Sower is presented in the immediately following context, so also do the disciples ask about the *parables* (4:10), but only the interpretation of Parable of the Sower is presented in Jesus' response to them.²¹ It seems that this ambiguity between the plural references to parables in 4:2, 10, on the one hand, and the singular focus on the Parable of the Sower,²² on the other, indicates that Mark is using the presentation and interpretation of the Parable of the Sower to illustrate concretely the customary mode or paradigm of Jesus' parabolic teaching:²³ public presentation followed by the disciples' request for, and reception of, interpretations while alone with Jesus.²⁴ Thus, the disciples are portrayed as regularly requesting explanations of parables (cf. 4:34), which are veiled presentations of the mystery of the kingdom of God, much like apocalyptic seers request interpretations of visions, which veil mysteries in symbolic imagery.²⁵

The disciples' cognitive humanity is emphasized not only in their inquisitiveness about the interpretation of parables, but also in Jesus' response to them. Jesus expresses surprise at the fact that they do not understand the parable, and so have requested an interpretation of it: "Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand any parable [οὐκ οἶδατε τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην, καὶ πῶς

21. Collins concludes that these apparent discrepancies are the result of two sources being combined into one narrative (Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 251). A simpler, and equally probable, explanation would be that the Parable of the Sower is solely presented for the purpose of illustrating the two distinct phases of public proclamation and private explanation. Since the Parable of the Sower itself is concerned with human responses to the word, its suitability as a representative parable is not difficult to discern given the theme of 4:1-34.

22. See this same phenomenon in 12:1 (plural) and 12:12 (singular).

23. Cf. Schuyler Brown, "'The Secret of the Kingdom of God' (Mark 4:11)," 67.

24. As will be noted in the following, this same mode of parabolic teaching occurs elsewhere in Mark. That the Parable of the Sower is set forth as the customary mode of teaching finds support in the imperfect tense verbs in 4:33-34 (ἐλάλει [2x]; ἠδύνατο; ἐπέλυεν), which may imply that the imperfect in 4:10 (ἠρώτων) has a customary sense as well. Jesus' comment in 4:13 ("Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand any parable?") indicates that the Parable of the Sower—more precisely, the interpretation of this parable—has special significance among the parables, functioning as a hermeneutical entrance into their interpretations.

25. Collins likewise detects "an interpretive schema characteristic of prophetic and apocalyptic literature, namely, a formal pattern used in the interpretation of dreams and visions" (Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 240). Cf. Marcus, *Mystery*, 46.

πάσας τὰς παραβολὰς γνώσεσθε]?” (4:13). Commentators have tended to view this statement as a contradiction of Jesus’ earlier identification of the disciples as recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God. In other words, how is it that they do not understand the parable when Jesus has just told them that they are recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God? Some resolve this apparent contradiction by attributing 4:13 to a different source than that of 4:11.²⁶ However, Part 1 of this study noted that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers frequently includes assertions of the seer’s exclusive reception of revealed mysteries (as in 4:11) together with an emphasis on the seer’s cognitive humanity (as in 4:13). For example, in *4 Ezra*, the angel Uriel repeatedly emphasizes Ezra’s deficient understanding, and that his cognitive humanity prohibits him from understanding God’s ways or heavenly matters (cf. *4 Ezra* 4:2; 10-11, 21; 5:34-35, 40). Yet, despite the emphasis that Ezra’s cognitive humanity receives, Uriel also repeatedly asserts Ezra’s exclusivity as a recipient of divine mysteries: “you alone are worthy to learn this secret from the Most High” (*4 Ezra* 12:36; cf. 7:44; 8:62; 10:38, 57; 12:11-12; 13:53). Similarly, after Ezra sees the vision of a woman, but before he receives the interpretation of it, he exclaims, “I have seen what I did not know, and I have heard what I do not understand” (*4 Ezra* 10:35; cf. Dan 12:8). This leads to an explanation of the vision, wherein Uriel says that “the Most High has revealed many secrets to you” (*4 Ezra* 10:38). Therefore, it is in keeping with the portrayal of apocalyptic seers that Jesus’ response to the disciples’ inquisitiveness in 4:11-13 emphasizes both their exclusive reception of the mystery of the kingdom of God and their cognitive humanity. One need not conclude that this represents an inelegant fusing of multiple sources.²⁷

Jesus’ apparent surprise at the disciples’ cognitive humanity is similar to passages in the apocalypses where a divine mediator expresses surprise that the seer

26. E.g., Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 239–40, 251.

27. Cf. Räisänen, *Messianic Secret*, 16–17, who sees here a “clumsy construction.”

requires an explanation of some feature of the revelation. In the *Testament of Abraham*, Michael responds to Abraham's question about a figure in his vision with, "Do you not know who he is [Οὐκ ἔγνωσ αὐτὸν τίς ἐστίν]?" (*T. Ab.* 8:8 [B]). Hermas' inability to correctly identify the Shepherd provokes a similar expression of divine surprise: "Do you not recognize me [Οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκεις με]?" (*Herm.* 25:3).²⁸ The point was made in ch. 4 that these expressions of divine surprise at a seer's cognitive humanity probably echo the angelic responses to Zechariah's questions about his visions: "Do you not know what these are?" (הֲלוֹא יָדַעַת מִה־הֵמָּה אֵלֶּה) ; οὐ γινώσκεις τί ἐστὶν ταῦτα [*Zech* 4:5]; הֲלוֹא יָדַעַת מִה־אֵלֶּה ; οὐκ οἶδας τί ἐστὶν ταῦτα [*Zech* 4:13]). Their rhetorical function in revelatory contexts is to highlight the seer's cognitive humanity against the backdrop of the divine realm, and not necessarily to reflect a negative view of the seer.²⁹ Likewise, Jesus' statement in 4:13 emphasizes the disciples' cognitive humanity as they encounter the mystery of the kingdom of God in parabolic form. It contributes to the distinctive revelatory scheme of Jesus' parables that the narrative is constructing for the reader by escalating the disciples' cognitive humanity, thereby underscoring that the explanations are the key by which the disciples achieve understanding. In other words, Jesus' response serves the rhetorical function of *supporting* the portrayal of the disciples as recipients of a divine mystery rather than contradicting it. Consequently, one should not immediately conclude, as many do, that Jesus' response in 4:13 is designed to reflect

28. Cf. also *Rev* 17:7; *1 En.* 25:1; 21:5.

29. In *Ezek* 17:12, Ezekiel is told to direct a similar response to the people for failing to understand the parable of the eagles and vine: הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתֶּם מִה־אֵלֶּה ; οὐκ ἐπίστασθε τί ἦν ταῦτα. This response has a negative tone, and could be rightly classified as a rebuke, since it is directed to the "rebellious" people. As Lemcio has pointed out, *Ezek* 17:12 is similar to *Mark* 4:13—both statements follow the presentation of a parable, and both precede the interpretation of the parable (Eugene E. Lemcio, "External Evidence for the Structure and Function of *Mark* Iv. 1–20, Vii. 14–23 and Viii. 14–21," *JTS* 29 [1978]: 325–27). However, since Jesus' statement in *Mark* 4:13 takes place within the context of a private revelatory dialogue with the disciples, it seems that the more appropriate parallels come from Zechariah 4 and the apocalypses. And as Lemcio rightly points out, when these statements occur in the apocalypses, there is no implication that the seer should have understood the revelatory content apart from explanation (*Ibid.*, 328). This view is against the one espoused by Burkill, "Cryptology," 252.

a negative view of the disciples.³⁰ Instead, Jesus voices a normal response of a divine mediator of revelation when confronted with the cognitive humanity of an apocalyptic seer.

Summary.

Scholars have frequently noted the connection between the apocalyptic scheme of revelation and Jesus' parabolic teaching, especially with reference to Mark 4:1-34.³¹ However, the connection between the two has usually centered upon their common use of the language of 'mystery', and that parables, like visions, require explanation. Building upon these observations, the above analysis has attempted to speak more precisely about these connections, specifically with reference to the portrayal of the disciples. First, it was observed that Mark uses some of the same features in conjunction with his portrayal of the disciples that the apocalypses do to portray the apocalyptic seer as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries. Two exclusionary statements (4:11, 34) underscore the disciples' status as exclusive recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God. Additionally, these exclusionary statements are closely connected with a spatial distinction between the disciples and the 'outsiders' (4:10, 11, 33-34). The mystery of the kingdom of God is exclusively granted to them through Jesus' explanations in private settings. These private revelatory settings comport with the feature of narrative isolation that is common in the apocalypse genre. Secondly, it was observed that Mark portrays the disciples as

30. E.g., Räisänen, *Messianic Secret*, 17; Paul L. Danove, *The Rhetoric of Characterization of God, Jesus, and Jesus' Disciples in the Gospel of Mark* (JSNTSup 290; New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 94-95; James G. Williams, *Gospel Against Parable: Mark's Language of Mystery* (Bible and Literature Series 12; Sheffield: Almond, 1985), 55-63; Eduard Schweizer, "The Question of the Messianic Secret in Mark," in *The Messianic Secret* (ed. Christopher Tuckett; IRT 1; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 68-69; Perkins, *Peter*, 61.

31. E.g., Lucien Cerfaux, "La Connaissance Des Secrets Du Royaume d'Après Matt. XIII. 11 et Parallèles," *NTS* 2, no. 4 (1956): 238-49; Hawkin, "Incomprehension," 497; Freyne, "Maskilim," 13-15; Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 174-82; Vernon K. Robbins, "The Intertexture of Apocalyptic Discourse in the Gospel of Mark," in *The Intertexture of Apocalyptic Discourse in the New Testament* (ed. Duane F. Watson; SBLSymS 14; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 29-32; Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 240; Ahearne-Kroll, "Audience," 730-31.

exhibiting the same type of cognitive humanity in response to Jesus' parables as apocalyptic seers do when encountering the divine realm. Like apocalyptic seers, they are unable to understand what is veiled unless it is explained and interpreted for them. This is exhibited by their request for interpretation (4:10) and by Jesus' emphasis of their cognitive humanity before interpreting the Parable of the Sower (4:13). Just as apocalyptic seers are dependent upon a divine mediator in order to transition from mere observation of mysteries to an understanding of them, so are the disciples dependent upon Jesus in order to understand the parables that they hear.

In sum, the portrayal of the disciples—a larger group than just the Twelve—in 4:1-34 has been influenced considerably by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers. This section of the narrative only speaks of the Twelve collectively, and no special attention is directed towards Peter. Yet, based upon the preceding narrative (cf. 1:16-18, 29-31, 36-37) and the reference to the Twelve (4:10, cf. 3:14-19), Mark's readership would have obviously understood that Peter was a part of the group to whom the mystery of the kingdom of God had been revealed. Through many of the same features that are found in the apocalypses, Mark has constructed a revelatory paradigm in association with Jesus' parabolic teaching, wherein the disciples collectively occupy the role of apocalyptic seer, and Jesus occupies the role of divine mediator of revelation.³²

Additional Expressions of the Paradigm

The concluding narratorial comment in 4:34, which says that Jesus "explained all things [ἐπέλυνεν πάντα]" to his disciples, certainly refers to the interpretation of parables, such as those presented in 4:1-34. However, this statement probably also refers to other forms of enigmatic proclamation that required his explanation or

32. Cf. Freyne, "Maskilim," 16. Howard C. Kee, *Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel* (NTL; London: SCM, 1977), 87-88 compares Jesus' function of revealing secrets to that of Teacher of Righteousness.

interpretation.³³ Indeed, there are several points in the narrative where the paradigm associated with parables in 4:1-34 is recapitulated in conjunction with other, somewhat less ‘parabolic’, forms of Jesus’ teaching.

Cleanliness in the Kingdom of God.

In 7:1-23, Mark presents Jesus’ teaching on cleanliness, which he proclaims in response to the Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem who assert that Jesus’ disciples eat with unclean hands. Jesus responds to them first with an Isaianic denunciation of their religious practice, which prizes tradition over the commands of God (7:6-13). Then in 7:14, Jesus calls the crowd to him, exhorting them to listen and understand: “Listen to me, all of you, and understand [ἀκούσατέ μου πάντες καὶ σύνετε].” Within the context of the narrative, this exhortation alludes to Jesus’ earlier citation of Isa 6:9-10, which distinguishes between observation (ἀκούω) and understanding (συνήμι) (cf. 4:12b). Thus, in prophetic fashion, he is inviting the crowd to listen to his teaching in such a way as to perceive its veiled message.³⁴ What follows is an enigmatic statement about the true causes of defilement: “there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are

33. Even if 4:34 only refers to what can be technically classified as a ‘parable’, it must be recognized that the ancient conception (or semantic range) of παραβολή is broad enough to include almost any kind of enigmatic speech. In the LXX, παραβολή is used to refer to: a proverbial saying (cf. 1 Sam 10:12; 24:13[14]; 1 Kgs 4:32[5:12]; Ps 49:4[49:5 MT/48:5 LXX]; Prov 1:6; Eccl 12:9; Ezek 12:22-23; 16:44; 18:2-3; Sir 1:25; 3:39; 13:26; 20:20; 38:33; 47:15-17); a taunt or object of ridicule (cf. Deut 28:37; 2 Chr 7:20; Ps 44:14[44:15 MT/43:15 LXX]; 69:11[69:12 MT/ 68:12 LXX]; Jer 24:9; Hab 2:6; Mic 2:4; Wis 5:4; Tob 3:4); a prophetic oracle (cf. Num 23:7, 18: 24:3, 15, 20, 21, 23; 2 Sam 23:3). It is applied to oracles involving high degrees of symbolism in Ezek 17:2; 19:14; 20:49[21:5]; 24:3; Sir 39:1-10; Dan 12:8[OG only]. Cf. also its use in *I En.* 1:2-3 to refer to Enoch’s introductory oracle (cf. the similar language used in Balaam’s oracles in Num 23-24), and by extension, the visionary content of the Enochic corpus (cf. references in the *Similitudes*, which does not survive in Greek—*I En.* 37:5; 38:1; 43:4; 45:1; 57:3; 58:1; 60:1; 68:1; 69:29). In *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 4:20-21, Isaiah’s oracles in the book of Isaiah are called parables, as are the psalms of David (though these verses are not preserved in the extant Greek fragments). Marcus concludes that the definition of ‘parable’ in Mark should also include events, and so encompasses Jesus’ entire ministry, since it mysteriously expressed the kingdom of God (Marcus, *Mystery*, 109–111; cf. Jeremias, *Parables*, 227–29; Ahearne-Kroll, “Audience,” 732).

34. Whether they have the ability to do so is something that Mark leaves open to question. Perhaps a similar injunction to reflect on the deeper meaning of parabolic speech is seen in 2 Tim 2:4-7.

what defile” (7:15).³⁵ In accordance with the paradigm of parables established in 4:1-34—public presentation followed by private explanation to the disciples—Mark narrates, “When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable [ἐπηρώτων αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ τὴν παραβολήν]” (7:17). With this, Mark has constructed a private setting for Jesus’ interpretation of the parable.³⁶ Therefore, as was the case in 4:1-34, Mark uses narrative isolation to portray the disciples as exclusive recipients of Jesus’ explanation of this parable. This explanation presumably discloses to them the mystery of the kingdom of God as do the explanations of parables in 4:1-34. More specifically, Jesus explains the true source of uncleanness, which discloses that cleanliness is determined differently in the kingdom of God than it is by the Pharisees and scribes of Jerusalem. What was veiled in Jesus’ public proclamation of the parable is exclusively revealed to the disciples in a private setting.³⁷

35. That Mark classifies this as a parable (7:17) indicates that his conception of ‘parable’ likely includes any enigmatic speech, and not simply teaching analogous to what is found in 4:1-34. It is perhaps noteworthy that a variant appears in the ms tradition, which includes the standard conclusion to a parable: εἰ τις ἐχει ὠτα ἀκοῦειν ἀκουέτω (A D W Θ f^{1.13} 33 ℞ latt sy sa^{ms} bo^{pt}).

36. Regarding the significance of their location in the house for Mark’s readers, see Klauck, “Die Rolle,” 23–24.

37. Daube suggests that Mark 7:1-23 and 10:1-12 (which is treated later in this chapter) use a form that is also found in the rabbinic literature. This form—public retort followed by private explanation—consists of four parts: 1) a hostile question posed by outsiders to the rabbi, 2) the rabbi’s retort which functions only to dismiss the inquisitor, 3) a question by the rabbi’s disciples, and 4) the rabbi’s explanation (David Daube, “Public Retort Followed by Private Explanation,” in *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* [reprinted from the 1956 publication: *The Jewish People: History, Religion, Literature*; Salem, New Hampshire: Ayer Company, 1992], 141–50). Although there is indeed some overlap between Mark 7:1-23; 10:1-12 and the rabbinic parallels that Daube adduces, there are a few reasons to view the apocalypses as providing the more fitting parallels to these episodes. First, the rabbinic parallels do not account for Jesus’ response to the disciples in 7:18, which questions whether they are also without understanding. Daube does not treat this portion of Jesus’ response in his analysis (Ibid., 142–43). But the apocalypses do provide a formal precedent for such responses to requests for explanation. Second, as has been argued in the preceding section, Mark 4:1-34 constructs a revelatory paradigm for Jesus’ parables and enigmatic proclamation that appears again here. That Mark identifies 7:1-23 as a parable suggests that it communicates some aspect of the mystery of the kingdom of God (cf. 4:11, 33-34). Therefore, the privacy of the explanation to the disciples is designed to preserve the exclusivity of the revelation of this mystery, as narrative isolation does in the apocalypses. In the rabbinic parallels that Daube adduces, there are no indications that privacy has this function of preserving the exclusivity of the revelation of mysteries. Third, the form of vision and interpretation is found in much earlier literature, and so should probably be preferred as the more likely formal parallel over the form that Daube finds in the

Like Jesus' response to the disciples' inquisitiveness concerning parables in 4:13, his response to their question about this parable also emphasizes their cognitive humanity: "So even you are without understanding [οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀσύνετοί ἐστε]? Do you not understand [οὐ νοεῖτε] that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile" (7:18). As was noted in the discussion of 4:13, divine mediators sometimes respond similarly in the apocalypses when the seer requests explanation of some feature of the revelation, or when he is unable to understand it apart from explanation (cf. *T. Ab.* 8:8 [B]; *Herm.* 25:3). Such responses reflect the clear distinction in the apocalypses between the divine realm, of which the mediator is a part and wherein mysteries originate, and the human realm, which is the seer's normal realm of existence and cognition. The main function of these responses in revelatory contexts is to highlight the seer's cognitive humanity against the backdrop of the mysteries of the divine realm, and not necessarily to emphasize a flaw in the seer's character. Therefore, although Jesus' response certainly does not reflect positively on the disciples,³⁸ a significant part of its rhetorical purpose is to underscore their cognitive humanity when confronted with the mysteries of the divine realm, as expressed in Jesus' enigmatic proclamation. In light of the fact that Jesus has discredited the Pharisees' teaching as mere human tradition (τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων [7:8]), it is not unreasonable to conclude that the disciples' exclusive reception of Jesus' explanation of this parable has a polemical force—i.e., to reiterate to the readership that Jesus' disciples, in contrast to the Pharisees, are those whose teaching regarding cleanliness constitutes more than mere human tradition. Their teaching represents the halakah that is observed in light of the nearness of the

rabbinic literature.

38. Indeed, ἀσύνετος does often imply "foolishness" or low moral character (e.g., *Wis* 11:15; *Sir* 21:18; *T. Levi* 7:2; *I Clem.* 39:1; *Herm.* 14:5; 91:4; 99:3), though it does not always carry these implications. Elsewhere ἀσύνετος carries the meaning of "imperception" or "dullness" (e.g., *I Clem.* 36:2; *Barn.* 2:9; 5:3; *Herm.* 18:9; 40:2-3; 47:2; 89:1).

kingdom of God. As in 4:1-34, there is no special focus on Peter in 7:1-23; he simply stands undistinguished from the group as a whole.

Certain Kinds of Spirits and the Assault on Satan's Kingdom.

The paradigm that Mark has associated with parables in 4:1-34 appears again in 9:14-29. However, in this episode the disciples' private request for, and reception of, an explanation from Jesus does not follow his public proclamation, as is normally the case; rather, it follows the disciples' failed attempt to perform an exorcism. Their inability to perform this exorcism indeed requires explanation since Jesus had given them authority to do so (3:14-15; 6:7), and they had previously been successful doing so (6:13). Therefore, after Jesus performs the exorcism on their behalf, the disciples ask him why they had not been able to: "When he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately [Καὶ εἰσελθόντος αὐτοῦ εἰς οἶκον οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ κατ' ἰδίαν ἐπηρώτων αὐτόν], 'Why could we not cast it out?'" (9:28). Jesus' private explanation to the disciples in 9:28-29 clarifies the conundrum of why they could not exorcise this demon, even though the Holy Spirit was indeed working through them: "This kind [τοῦτο τὸ γένος] can come out only through prayer" (9:29).

In view of the revelatory significance that Mark gave to private moments of explanation, it seems that Mark's use of narrative isolation here is designed to signal that the disciples are receiving exclusive revelation concerning more difficult types of exorcisms. This relates to the mystery of the kingdom of God by way of the fact that "exorcisms offered dramatic proof of the defeat and retreat of Satan's kingdom in the face of the advancing rule of God."³⁹ Yet, since this is not an explanation of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation, it does deviate somewhat from the general paradigm established in 4:1-34. Nevertheless, this private teaching explains an enigmatic

39. Craig A. Evans, "Exorcisms and the Kingdom: Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan," in *Key Events in the Life of the Historical Jesus: A Collaborative Exploration of Context and Coherence* (ed. Darrell L. Bock and Robert L. Webb; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 176. On the connection between exorcisms and apocalyptic discourse in Mark, see Robbins, "Apocalyptic Discourse," 22-28.

situation arising from the disciples' inability to exorcise this spirit, even though their exorcistic abilities derived from Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Still, Peter receives no special attention in this episode.

The Community of the Kingdom and Eschatological Consequence.

Another variation of the paradigm occurs in 9:33-50. Here there is no public enigmatic proclamation, but the entire dialogue between Jesus and the disciples takes place in the private context of a house (9:33). Thus, Mark uses narrative isolation to portray the disciples as the exclusive recipients of Jesus' teaching concerning: status in the kingdom of God (9:35-37); sectarianism among the community empowered by the Spirit to perform exorcisms in the name of Jesus (vv. 38-41); and the eschatological consequences for sin (9:42-50). Perhaps the main reason that Mark situated this teaching in a private setting, thereby flagging it as a revelatory disclosure of sorts, was the theme of eschatological consequence that runs throughout. Jesus discloses to the disciples that: becoming first in the kingdom entails becoming last like a child (9:33-37); eschatological reward results from unrivaled service (9:38-41); eternal punishment awaits those who are excluded from the kingdom of God on account of their sin (9:42-5). Twice, the disciples express cognitive humanity that requires Jesus' correction and teaching (9:33-34, 38). Although there is not public enigmatic proclamation that provokes their cognitive humanity, their cognitive humanity still triggers Jesus' explanations of matters that Mark evidently considered among the πάντα that Jesus explained to them privately (cf. 4:34).

Divorce in the Kingdom of God.

The revelatory paradigm of parables is also present in 10:1-12. According to his regular practice, Jesus teaches the crowds that come to him (10:1). During this public teaching, some Pharisees test him by asking whether it is lawful for a man to divorce his wife (10:2). The first part of his response to them seems to be fairly straightforward, expounding on God's design for marriage before the problem of

hard human hearts. However, he then says, “[s]o they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate” (10:8-9). This statement is somewhat similar to the enigmatic statements of 4:21-25 and 7:15,⁴⁰ and the disciples require an explanation of it. The setting details that introduce the explanation indicate that it occurred while Jesus and the disciples were isolated in the house, apart from the crowds (Καὶ εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν πάλιν οἱ μαθηταὶ περὶ τούτου ἐπηρώτων αὐτόν [10:10]). Again, their request for an explanation of Jesus’ enigmatic proclamation exhibits their cognitive humanity, as it did in 4:10, 7:17, and 9:28. Yet, here Jesus does not express any surprise at, or rebuke of, their cognitive humanity (as in 4:13 and 7:18), but he simply acquiesces to their request, providing further elaboration of his teaching. In doing so, he clarifies that marriage reflects a permanent relationship established by God, and that the Mosaic concessions to a hard heart are no longer abiding, on account of the nearness of (or one’s participation in) the kingdom of God. Again, the disciples collectively receive this revelatory disclosure, and no special attention is focused on Peter.

The Temple and the Establishment of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus’ prophecy of the temple’s destruction is presented as the culmination of his preceding activity in the temple precinct (cf. 11:11, 15-18, 27; 12:35, 41), and as the conclusion to his pre-passion, public ministry: “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down” (13:2). Mark indicates that this prophecy (or some form of it) was known widely enough to contribute significantly to Jesus’ arrest and crucifixion (cf. 14:58; 15:29). However, the detailed explanation of it, much like the explanations of parables,⁴¹ is something

40. Marcus understands 10:9 to be a pronouncement like that of 7:19 (Joel Marcus, *Mark 8–16* [AB 27A; New York: Doubleday, 2009], 705).

41. Although she acknowledges the similarities between Mark 4:1-34 and ch. 13, Becker observes formal differences as well: “Mk 13,5bff. unterscheidet sich vom Gleichnisredenkomplex in Mk 4,1-34 vor allem dadurch, daß die apokalyptische Rede nicht durch Überleitungsformeln oder Zwischenfragen unterbrochen wird” (Eve-Marie Becker, “Markus 13 Re-Visited,” in *Apokalyptik als Herausforderung neutestamentlicher Theologie* [ed. Michael Becker and Markus Öhler; WUNT

that Jesus exclusively disclosed to his disciples—more specifically, Peter, James, John, and Andrew: “When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately [ἐπηρώτα αὐτὸν κατ’ ἰδίαν]...” (13:3). Thus, Mark uses narrative isolation to signal that these four disciples are the exclusive recipients of the eschatological mysteries that Jesus reveals in 13:5-37.⁴² These eschatological mysteries concern the end of the present age, and the consummated arrival of the kingdom of God.⁴³

Commentators have noted the many parallels between Jesus’ discourse in 13:5-37 and apocalyptic eschatology.⁴⁴ However, recent commentators have not classified it as an apocalypse, but as a “farewell discourse,”⁴⁵ “scholastic dialogue,”⁴⁶

2.214; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006], 102).

42. Marcus notes that “[t]he privateness of the instruction fits the topic, the secrets of the end-time” (Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 873). Collins similarly observes that “the setting κατ’ ἰδίαν (13:3) suggests that secret knowledge is being revealed to a chosen few” (Adela Yarbro Collins, “The Apocalyptic Rhetoric of Mark 13 in Historical Context,” *BR* 41 [1996]: 9).

43. That these mysteries comprise part of the mystery of the kingdom of God is noted by the reference to Daniel’s visions (cf. Mark 13:14), which were entirely concerned with the eschatological events leading to the establishment of God’s indestructible kingdom on earth (cf. Dan 2:44; 7:13-14, 18). Further, in this private discourse, Jesus tells the disciples that he has “foretold everything” to them (προείρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα [13:23]), which may echo Mark’s earlier narratorial comment that Jesus “explained everything” (ἐπέλυεν πάντα [4:34]) to the disciples in private settings.

44. See esp. Lars Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted. The Formation of Some Jewish Apocalyptic Texts and of the Eschatological Discourse Mark 13 Par* (ConBNT 1; Lund: Gleerup, 1966), 145–77.

45. Marcus claims that Jesus’ discourse “fits the genre of the farewell discourse,” and is “framed by the notion of his sacrificial death” (Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 866; cf. Morna D. Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* [BNTC; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991], 297–303). However, as Collins observes, its differences from the testament genre suggest that this is not the best classification (Adela Yarbro Collins, “Apocalyptic Rhetoric,” 7–8).

46. Collins recognizes the many points of connection that Jesus’ discourse has with the apocalypses, but she ultimately concludes that it should not be defined as an apocalypse, on account of the facts that Jesus is not a heavenly mediator of revelation, and the discourse is not presented within the first-person narration of a seer (Ibid., 8–9). Even though she identifies Jesus’ monologue of vv. 5-37 as a “prophetic oracle or apocalyptic discourse,” and she refers to vv. 3-37 as “rhetorically shaped esoteric instruction of a prophetic or apocalyptic nature,” she ultimately classifies 13:1-37 as “scholastic dialogue” (Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 594). Unfortunately, Collins does not provide any ancient parallels or examples of such scholastic dialogues, so it is difficult to assess how closely Mark 13 actually matches this genre. She argues that “[a]n apocalypse... is best defined as a narrative account of the reception of revelation by a human seer from a heavenly being. The Gospel of Mark identifies Jesus with the heavenly Son of Man, but he has not yet been exalted to that state in the narrative. In chapter 13, Jesus is presented as a teacher and prophet, not as a heavenly being” (Ibid.; Robbins, “Apocalyptic Discourse,” 36). Although one

or “eschatological discourse.”⁴⁷ The unfortunate result of these classifications is that the parallels between the portrayal of these four disciples and that of apocalyptic seers have not been clearly observed and discussed.

For example, Mark’s use of narrative isolation in 13:3 accords well with the deployment of narrative isolation in several apocalypses. In the book of Daniel, which certainly influenced Mark 13,⁴⁸ narrative isolation occurs in the introduction to Daniel’s final vision of chs. 10-12. Daniel says, “I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; the people who were with me did not see the vision, though great trembling fell upon them, and they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone to see this great vision” (Dan 10:7-8a). These setting details clearly indicate that Daniel was alone while listening to the angelic discourse of 11:2-12:13, which constitutes a detailed explanation of the events leading to the abomination of desolation (11:31; 12:11-12) and the appointed time of the end. Likewise, in *4 Ezra*, the setting details associated

might contend with her point that Jesus has not yet been exalted to the state of heavenly Son of Man in the narrative (cf. 9:2-8), her view of Jesus as a teacher or prophet is not an obstacle to classifying the discourse of 13:3-37 as an apocalypse. The apocalypses display flexibility in their conceptions of who can function as a mediator of revelation. Daniel performs this mediatorial function, interpreting Nebuchadnezzar’s dreams in Dan 2 and 4, much as the angelic mediators interpret his own dreams in Dan 7, 8, 10-12 (however, strictly speaking, Daniel acts as a mediator of revelation only in the non-apocalypse portion of the book). Likewise, after Enoch has taken up residence with the watchers, he functions as a mediator of revelation to his descendants in *1 En.* 65-66, 106. Therefore, although it is much more common for an angel to function as a mediator of revelation, humans can function in this capacity (e.g., Daniel), and humans with access to the divine realm certainly can (e.g., Enoch). In light of the transfiguration and the references to Jesus as the Son of God, Mark’s portrayal of Jesus is clearly the portrayal of a figure who transcends the strict ontological human status that constrains all other human teachers. For this reason, we should avoid a false dichotomy between Jesus’ status as a teacher and prophet, on the one hand, and his function as a divine mediator of revelation, on the other. Moreover, Mark has already indicated that Jesus’ private teaching and explanations disclose to the disciples the mystery of the kingdom of God, and so his private teaching is not merely *teaching*, but constitutes disclosures of a mystery. Additionally, we have noted that the disciples’ questions and requests for explanation are not merely the questions of students, but match the inquisitiveness that apocalyptic seers display in the apocalypses during their interaction with a mediator of revelation. Therefore, without ignoring the differences between Mark 13 and the apocalypses, it seems appropriate to classify Mark 13 as an apocalypse that has been situated within a gospel.

47. Evans argues against classifying it as an apocalypse or as a farewell discourse, opting instead for the somewhat ambiguous classification of “eschatological discourse” (Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20* [WBC 34B; Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001], 289–92).

48. Marcus notes the following echoes: cf. Mark 13:4 to Dan 12:6-7; cf. Mark 13:7 to Dan 2:28-29, 45; 12:13; cf. Mark 13:14 to Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; cf. Mark 13:26 to Dan 7:13-14 (Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 867).

with each of the eight revelatory episodes emphasize that Ezra receives disclosure of eschatological mysteries (i.e., the signs and chronology associated with the appointed time of the end [cf. 4 *Ezra* 7:26-43; 9:1-12]) while he is isolated from the rest of the people (cf. 5:16-19; 12:40-41, 49-51a; 14:36). Again, in 2 *Baruch*, the setting details emphasize that Baruch is isolated from other people just before hearing God describe the eschatological events (2 *Bar.* 20:5-21:1; 32:7-35:1). These events include the chronology leading up to the appointed time of the end, the revelation of the Messiah, and the resurrection of the dead (cf. 25:1-30:5). Therefore, the information that Jesus and the disciples were isolated during his disclosure of eschatological mysteries does not merely signify private teaching, but it is a standard component of similar discourses in the apocalypses. Here, as in the apocalypses, narrative isolation emphasizes that these four disciples are the exclusive recipients of revealed eschatological mysteries. Yet, as 13:37 indicates, what was exclusively revealed to these four disciples is intended to be secondarily disclosed on a wider scale: “And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.” Presumably, Mark’s readership (i.e., the “elect” and “chosen” [cf. 13:20]) would be considered among those receiving this wider, secondary disclosure.

The disciples’ cognitive humanity features here in the form of specific questions related to Jesus’ public prophecy. Despite the presence of four disciples, the singular form of the verb (ἐπηρώτα) suggests that only one—perhaps Peter⁴⁹—asks Jesus these questions.⁵⁰ The first question asks, “when will these things happen

49. So Jan Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse: literarische Analyse und Strukturuntersuchung* (AnBib 28; Rome: Päpstliches Bibelinstitut, 1967), 82; Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 602. Based on Peter’s role as spokesman for the group of disciples elsewhere in Mark’s Gospel and more generally in Synoptic tradition, the suggestion the Peter stands behind the singular verb here is an attractive one. There is no way to substantiate this, however. For this reason, the proposal is merely noted as plausible.

50. The singular verb retains the focus of 13:1 on one of the disciples (εἷς τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ), who drew Jesus’ attention to the buildings of the temple complex. Both Matthew and Luke dissolve Mark’s focus on one disciple, focusing instead on the group of disciples (Matt 24:1, 3; Luke 21:5, 7).

[πότε ταῦτα ἔσται],” and the second question asks, “what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished [τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα]” (13:4).⁵¹ Similar questions about the chronology and signs of the end are regularly posed by apocalyptic seers,⁵² and often arise out of the seer’s pursuit of specific details related to prophecies concerning the eschatological denouement. For example, in Dan 12:6 of the OG, Daniel asks “When, therefore, will be the fulfillment [πότε οὖν συντέλεια] of the wonders [τῶν θαυμαστῶν] and the purification of these things, of which you spoke to me about?”⁵³ Similarly, in *4 Ezra*, after the angel Uriel mentions that the present age is quickly coming to an end (*4 Ezra* 4:26), Ezra asks, “How long and when will these things be?” (4:33; cf. 4:45-46, 51). Additionally, Ezra asks, “[W]ho will be alive in those days?” (4:51). To this Uriel responds, “Concerning the signs about which you ask me, I can tell you in part...Now concerning the signs...” (4:52-5:1). Uriel then proceeds to describe the terror of those days, the proliferation of unrighteousness in them, and the cosmological upheaval associated with them (including a reference to falling stars [5:5; cf. Mark 13:25]). In the next revelatory episode, Ezra asks Uriel to show “the end of your signs which you showed me in part on a previous night” (6:12).⁵⁴ Again, Uriel responds with a description of the signs associated with the end (6:18-28). Ezra’s third revelatory episode once again begins with his question concerning the chronology leading to the end: “how long?” (6:59). After Uriel’s response, Ezra

51. Although the second question asks about signs, it also has a chronological concern, since the purpose of the signs is so that the righteous might be able to discern when the time of the end is at hand. Regarding Mark’s presentation of these questions, Becker comments, “In Mk 13...gestaltet Markus nicht nur die Rede Jesu, sondern auch die vorausgehenden Dialoge mit den Jünger im dramatischen Modus, so daß der Leser auch mit den Anfragen der Jünger unmittelbar konfrontiert wird” (Becker, “Markus 13,” 104).

52. Marcus comments that the question about when ‘these things’ will happen “echoes one that is frequently asked in the apocalyptic literature.” He cites *4 Ezra* 8:66-9:2, 4:53, and *2 Bar.* 25:2 as parallels (Marcus, *Mark 8-16*, 874).

53. In the MT and Th, Daniel is not the one who asks the question, but he hears one divine being ask this question of another, which matches what occurs in Dan 8:13.

54. This is preceded by Ezra’s question about the dividing of the times (*4 Ezra* 6:7).

continues to press for more details: “[Y]ou have shown me a multitude of the signs which you will do in the last times, but you have not shown me when you will do them” (8:63). Likewise, in 2 *Baruch*, after Baruch has heard a terse eschatological prophecy (2 *Bar.* 23:6-24:2), he requests details about the chronology and signs associated with the end: “[T]hat which will happen with our enemies, I do not know, or when you will command your works” (24:4). The divine voice then tells Baruch, “This then will be the sign,” and proceeds to detail the tribulations of that time (25:2-4). Baruch then asks, “That tribulation which will be will it last a long time; and that distress, will it embrace many years?” (26:1). The divine voice answers with a description of the twelve-fold division of the tribulation (27:1-15).⁵⁵

As these references indicate, the cognitive humanity of apocalyptic seers is regularly expressed through questions that seek increasingly precise details concerning the *chronology* and *signs* associated with God’s appointed time of the end. Divine answers to these questions disclose eschatological mysteries to the seer, enabling him to transcend the threshold of his cognitive humanity. Likewise, in Mark 13:5-37, Jesus responds to these questions about the *chronology* and *signs* of the end with a detailed description of eschatological mysteries, so enabling these four disciples to achieve divine insight concerning eschatological events. Moreover, Jesus’ discourse emphasizes that these four disciples have received a comprehensive disclosure of eschatological details: “But you watch [ὁμεῖς δὲ βλέπετε]! I have foretold everything to you [προείρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα]” (13:23). Jesus’ statement is very similar to those of angelic mediators in the apocalypses, which emphasize the comprehensiveness of the disclosure: “Behold, I have shown you everything, Enoch, and I have revealed everything to you...” (1 *En.* 80:1; cf. 81:2); “And I will explain

55. Cf. also the questions concerned with chronology in *Apoc. Ab.* 28:2; 29:1; *Apoc. Zeph.* 10:11.

to you what will be, and everything that will be in the last days” (*Apoc. Ab. 24:2*).⁵⁶

Although a broad audience had heard Jesus prophesy the destruction of the temple, Mark has used narrative isolation to construct a private, revelatory setting in which four of Jesus’ disciples press Jesus for the same details that apocalyptic seers were typically portrayed as pursuing. Additionally, apocalyptic seers often voice these questions during revelatory episodes that occur while they are mourning over the destruction of the temple (e.g., *Dan 9:1-20*; *4 Ezra 3:1-2*; *10:38-39*; *12:48*; *2 Bar. 4:1-10:19*). This stereotyped contemplation of the temple’s condition is probably at play in Mark 13, though in a different configuration. Rather than mourning over the temple, the disciples, in contrast, are exulting its glory. Nevertheless, Jesus’ prophecy of the temple’s future destruction is what provokes the questions of 13:4. His answer to these questions gives them a comprehensive disclosure of the eschatological events. Notably, however, this comprehensive disclosure does not include precise chronology, which represents another departure from similar disclosures in the apocalypses.

In sum, the portrayal of Peter and the three other disciples in Mark 13 has been influenced significantly by the portrayal of apocalyptic seers. First, Mark has used narrative isolation to portray them as the exclusive recipients of eschatological mysteries. Such deployments narrative isolation occur widely in the apocalypses in conjunction with similarly detailed disclosures of eschatological mysteries. Second, one of the disciples asks questions about the signs and chronology associated with the temple’s destruction. Such questions are characteristic expressions of an apocalyptic seer’s cognitive humanity as he presses the divine mediator of revelation for increasingly precise eschatological details. Third, within this private disclosure,

56. Cf. *4 Ezra 6:33*: “[The Most High] sent me to show you all these things, and to say to you: ‘Believe and do not be afraid!’” Cf. also *1 En. 81:5-6*; *2 En. 33:3, 6*. Such statements made by divine mediators of revelation are also reflected in the testamentary speech of the patriarchs (e.g., *T. Levi 19:1*; *T. Sim. 6:1*; *1 En. 79:1*; *91:1*; *107:3*).

Jesus presents and explains two parables. As with 4:1-34, explained parables disclose the mystery of the kingdom of God to the disciples. Therefore, the Parable of the Fig Tree (13:28-31) and the Parable of the Returning Homeowner (13:34-37) describe the sudden and surprising coming of the Son of Man. Through these explained parables, these four disciples are granted insight into the manner in which the kingdom of God will be consummately manifest in the earthly realm. In Mark 13, “die vier Erstberufenen” are distinguished from the larger group as the exclusive recipients of this disclosure,⁵⁷ which underscores their privileged access to a certain level of revelation from which even other disciples were excluded. Within this group of four, Peter is listed first, but does not feature more prominently than its other members, unless one holds to the idea that Peter is the implied inquisitor of 13:3-4, which cannot be verified.

Summary.

Beyond the presentation of Jesus’ parabolic teaching in Mark 4:1-34, there are five other episodes where the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has influenced the portrayal of Peter and the disciples in connection with Jesus’ enigmatic proclamation.⁵⁸ In each of these five episodes, narrative isolation establishes the disciples’ exclusive access to Jesus’ explanations, and each episode stresses that the disciples’ cognitive humanity leaves them dependent upon Jesus in order to understand what is veiled about the mystery of the kingdom of God.

Conclusion

This section has argued that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers as the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, and as humans encountering the divine realm, has influenced Mark’s portrayal of Peter in connection with Jesus’ enigmatic

57. Klauck, “Die Rolle,” 8.

58. Similarly, Brown identifies all but one of these (i.e., 9:33-50) as additional points where the disciples are granted insight into the mystery of the kingdom of God (Schuyler Brown, “‘The Secret of the Kingdom of God’ [Mark 4:11],” 68–69).

proclamation. Yet, this influence has only come to bear on the portrayal of Peter inasmuch as it has also come to bear on the portrayal of the groups of disciples to which he belongs. Peter is never explicitly distinguished from the other disciples in the groups of Twelve and Four of which he is a part. However, this should not obscure the fact that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has substantially shaped Mark's portrayal of these groups of disciples, and it is from these larger groups of disciples that Peter emerges elsewhere in the narrative. In this respect, Mark's portrayal of the disciples as apocalyptic seers constitutes the foundation upon which any special Petrine focus is built. We will note this special focus in the next section.

Just as the apocalypses use exclusionary statements to emphasize the seer's exclusive reception of revealed mysteries, so also does Mark use two exclusionary statements in 4:1-34 to emphasize the disciples' exclusive reception of the mystery of the kingdom of God. These two exclusionary statements are closely related to a spatial distinction between the disciples and the "outsiders." This spatial distinction has revelatory implications, since it is in these private settings that Jesus explains his enigmatic proclamation, thereby disclosing the mystery of the kingdom of God. In this way, the narrative isolation that frequently appears in the apocalypses also figures significantly into Mark's narrative. Since Mark has indicated in 4:1-34 that the mystery of the kingdom of God is delivered to the disciples through Jesus' explanations of "all things" while in private, each of the five additional expressions of the paradigm (i.e., 7:1-23; 9:14-29, 33-50; 10:1-12; 13:1-37) should also be understood as disclosures of the mystery of the kingdom of God, even though the phrase does not occur again in them. Thus, it can be seen that the mystery includes matters such as: how the kingdom of God is presently manifest and inaugurated within the human realm (cf. 4:1-34); halakah associated with the nearness of the kingdom of God (7:1-23; 10:1-12); the manner in which the kingdom advances

against certain spirits in the Satanic kingdom (9:14-29); communal status, sectarianism, and sin (9:33-50); and how and when the kingdom of God will be consummately manifest in the human realm (13:1-37). In short, these matters overlap substantially with what are usually classified as eschatological mysteries in the apocalypses.

Along with Mark's portrayal of the disciples as the exclusive recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God, he has also emphasized their cognitive humanity. Just as apocalyptic seers are dependent upon divine beings in order to understand veiled presentations of mysteries, so also does Mark portray the disciples as being utterly dependent upon Jesus in order to understand his enigmatic proclamation. Moreover, in two episodes, their cognitive humanity elicits surprised responses from Jesus, which escalates the mysterious, otherworldly quality of his explanations (4:13; 7:18). Furthermore, Jesus' responses accord with those attributed to divine mediators of revelation during their interaction with apocalyptic seers in the apocalypses. Finally, one of the four disciples present with Jesus in 13:3-37 asks him questions that are regularly asked by apocalyptic seers—questions concerning the signs and chronology associated with the end of the age.

Jesus' Messianic Identity and Mode

Mark's portrayal of Peter and the disciples has also been shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers in connection with Jesus' messianic identity and mode. Some of the same features that are used to portray apocalyptic seers as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries—narrative isolation and dissemination details—are used by Mark to portray Peter and the disciples as those who have exclusive insight into Jesus' messianic identity and mode. According to Mark, Jesus' true identity as the Messiah is a mystery that lies beyond the limits of cognitive humanity. This mystery is most clearly disclosed to Peter, James, and John in the

transfiguration. However, prior to the transfiguration and after his confession of Jesus' identity, Peter, on account of his cognitive humanity, does not understand Jesus' messianic mode, which requires suffering. Therefore, Jesus delivers to the disciples exclusive insight concerning his messianic mode as the Son of Man.

Jesus' Messianic Identity

Jesus' true identity is known by divine beings, but is scarcely realized by human beings.⁵⁹ Peter is presented as the first human to correctly identify Jesus as the Messiah, thereby crossing the threshold of his cognitive humanity, to a degree. However, Peter only fully perceives Jesus' messianic identity during the transfiguration; he is one of three disciples who see Jesus transfigured to his heavenly glory and hear the divine voice refer to him with the messianic title, "beloved Son." Thus, these disciples gain a divine perspective on Jesus' identity.

Imperception as Cognitive Humanity.

The beginning of Mark's Gospel tells the reader that Jesus is the Messiah: Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ] (1:1).⁶⁰ Yet, within the narrative itself, the human characters do not realize Jesus' messianic identity so quickly. Mark makes this point by drawing a contrast between divine and human estimations of Jesus. Voices from the divine realm readily declare what is obvious from their divine point of view. The first voice is that of God in heaven, confirming Jesus' Sonship after the Spirit has descended upon him: σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα (1:11). The second voice from the divine realm is that of demonic spirits. There are two points in the narrative where demons identify him as the Messiah: "I know who you are, the Holy One of God [οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ]" (1:24);

59. Cf. Joel Marcus, "Mark 4:10–12 and Marcan Epistemology," *JBL* 103 (1984): 558–59.

60. The brackets retain those that are present in NA²⁷. As Metzger remarks, the omission of υἱοῦ θεοῦ in some mss may be due to an oversight of the *nomina sacra* often used to abbreviate this title (Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [2 ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2002], 62, BibleWorks, v.8).

“What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God [τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου]?” (5:7). Additionally, Mark narrates, “Whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and shouted, ‘You are the Son of God [σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ]!’” (3:11). On account of their participation in the divine realm, demonic spirits simply recognize that Jesus is the Messiah.⁶¹

In contrast with these correct, divine estimations of Jesus, Mark presents several human estimations of Jesus that fall short. People indeed discern that there is a supernatural source of Jesus’ teaching, and that some divine power is at work in his exorcistic and therapeutic ministry (cf. 1:22, 27; 2:12; 6:2).⁶² These human characters conclude, at best, that Jesus is a prophet of some sort—John the Baptist in resurrected form, Elijah, or a prophet like those of long ago (6:14-15).⁶³ However, those in Jesus’ hometown give him no prophetic honor, apparently because of their familiarity with his background (6:3-4), and his family concludes that he is out of his mind (ἐλέγον γὰρ ὅτι ἐξέστη [3:21]). At worst, the scribes from Jerusalem conclude that he is possessed by Beelzeboul (3:22). The contrast of these human estimations with those of divine beings emphasizes that the matter of Jesus’ identity, like the explanations of parables, is a mystery of the divine realm that humans do not perceive, due to their cognitive humanity.⁶⁴

61. So T. A. Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation: An Examination of the Philosophy of St. Mark’s Gospel* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1963), 66, 96. Contrast the perceptiveness of the demons in Mark with the imperception of divine beings in *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 10:7-11, 18-31; 11:14-16; cf. also *Lad. Jac.* 7:19.

62. The frequent response of amazement indicates that these characters recognized something supernatural about whatever aspect of Jesus’ ministry is in view (ἐκπλήσσω [1:22; 6:2; 7:37; 11:18]; θαμβέω [1:27]; ἐξίστημι [2:12; 5:42]; θαυμάζω [6:6]). Timothy R. Dwyer, *The Motif of Wonder in the Gospel of Mark* (JSNTSup 128; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 143, relates this response to “the acts of God in the breaking-in of the kingdom.”

63. The notable exception to this comes towards the end of the narrative, when the centurion acknowledges Jesus as the “Son of God” (ἀληθῶς οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος υἱὸς θεοῦ ἦν [15:39]).

64. In the apocalypses, information about the Messiah is usually presented along with other eschatological mysteries. As with any mystery of the divine realm, humans can only glimpse the Messiah (prior to the eschaton, cf. *1 En.* 62:7) during a revelatory episode (e.g., *Dan* 7:13-14; *1 En.* 46:1-5; 48:2-7; *4 Ezra* 11:36-12:3; 12:31-38; 13:1-13, 21-50; *2 Bar.* 39:7-40:3; 70:9; *Apoc. Ab.* 29:4-31:2; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 9:13-18, 27-32; 10:7-11:35). Even when apocalyptic seers observe the

It has often been observed that the disciples, like all other human characters in the narrative, do not perceive Jesus' identity prior to Peter's confession in 8:27, even though Mark has clearly indicated that they have been granted the mystery of the kingdom of God (4:10). Thus, after Jesus demonstrates his power over the wind and sea, the disciples arrive at no firm conviction about his identity, and the episode concludes with their imprecise speculation: "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him [τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν ὅτι καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα ὑπακούει αὐτῷ]?" (4:41). Moreover, they do not immediately arrive at the correct answer to this question, as the following narrative attests. Each of the two miraculous feedings (five thousand [6:30-44]; four thousand [8:1-9]) are followed by an episode that displays the disciples' imperception and obduracy. First, Jesus walks on water to their boat. Mark reports that "they were utterly astounded [καὶ λίαν [ἐκ περισσοῦ] ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἐξίσταντο],⁶⁵ for they did not understand [οὐ γὰρ συνήκαν] about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened [ἀλλ' ἦν αὐτῶν ἡ καρδία πεπωρωμένη]" (6:51-52). This narratorial comment suggests that if they would have perceived the significance of the feeding miracle, then they would not have been utterly astounded that Jesus could walk upon the waves.⁶⁶ Perhaps they would have understood that his identity as the Son of God enabled him to do so, and would not have mistaken him for an apparition (φάντασμα) of some sort.⁶⁷ After the second miraculous feeding, the disciples once again find themselves in circumstances where they lack bread (8:14, 16; cf. 6:31-38; 8:4-5). Therefore, when Jesus tells them to beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod, Mark reports that they interpreted Jesus' enigmatic statement as referring to literal bread. This time, Jesus himself addresses their imperception:

Messiah, they frequently require explanation of his identity from an angelic mediator (e.g., *1 En.* 46:3; *4 Ezra* 13:14-15; *Apoc. Ab.* 29:7; cf. also *5 Ezra* 2:46-47).

65. The internal brackets retain those that are present in NA²⁷.

66. So Lane, *Mark*, 238. Cf. Freyne, "Maskilim," 17.

67. Henderson, *Christology*, 204-37, does not relate their imperception to Christology, but to their failure to understand their own "authority over the adversarial force animating the storm at sea."

Do you still not perceive or understand [οὐπω νοεῖτε οὐδὲ συνίετε]? Are your hearts hardened [πεπωρωμένην ἔχετε τὴν καρδίαν ὑμῶν]? Do you have eyes, and fail to see [ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντες οὐ βλέπετε]? Do you have ears, and fail to hear [καὶ ὦτα ἔχοντες οὐκ ἀκούετε]? And do you not remember [καὶ οὐ μνημονεύετε]?...Do you not yet understand [οὐπω συνίετε]? (8:17-18, 21).

As a part of this response, Jesus asks them to recall the miraculous provision of bread in the two feedings (8:19-20). At face value, then, the point seems to be that the disciples should have realized that Jesus' presence, or their status as his disciples, ensured provision of food during their travels (cf. 6:8-9); if they would have realized this, then they would not have missed the veiled significance of his reference to yeast, which is not taken up again. That they continued to be concerned with such provision, even after the two miraculous feedings, surely indicates that they had failed to perceive some veiled connection between these feedings and Jesus' identity (whatever that connection might be).⁶⁸ Indeed, with Jesus' final question of 8:21, Mark has seemingly left the disciples in a precarious condition of imperception and obduracy, aligning them very closely with the 'outsiders', whose observation falls short of understanding.⁶⁹

68. Similarly, Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 388. Hawkins says, "This strange story holds the key to the whole section. What the disciples do not understand is that Jesus is the one loaf for Jews and Gentiles, as the feeding narratives have shown. This is what the disciples do not comprehend, and this is how the section ends" (Hawkin, "Incomprehension," 495). Alternatively, Marcus suggests that the twelve and seven leftover baskets of bread (8:19-20) signify eschatological fullness that Jesus has brought about (Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8* [AB 27; New Haven; London: Yale, 2000], 514); eschatological fullness would connote that the Messiah had finally arrived. Meagher suggests that Mark himself did not understand the significance of this story (John C. Meagher, "Die Form- und Redaktionsungeschickliche Methoden: The Principle of Clumsiness and the Gospel of Mark," *JAAR* 43 [1975]: 470-71).

69. Cf. 6:52 and 8:17-8, 21 to 4:12. However, Brown's observation that the content of the messianic secret (i.e., Jesus' identity) is different than the content of the mystery of the kingdom of God does suggest that in 8:17-18, Jesus is not attributing to the disciples the same type of incomprehension as he attributed to the crowd in 4:12 (Schuyler Brown, "'The Secret of the Kingdom of God' [Mark 4:11]," 62-63). Cf. also Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Disciples/Crowds/Whoever: Markan Characters and Readers," *NovT* 18 (1986): 114-15, who notes that, across Mark's Gospel, the disciples hear but have difficulty understanding, much like the crowds. However, Robbins goes too far in claiming that Jesus' statement in 8:17-21 "leaves no doubt that the story-line of the disciples has changed from the story-line set forth in Mark 4:11-12" (Vernon K. Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse* [Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity Series 1; Blandford Forum: Deo, 2009], 280).

Many scholars simply conclude that the disciples' imperception reflects a Markan attempt to portray them negatively in this regard.⁷⁰ However, the cognitive humanity of apocalyptic seers provides an analogy for the incomprehension of the disciples, calling for more nuanced conclusions. In Part 1 of this study, we observed that apocalyptic seers not only experience an immediate transition from observation to understanding within individual revelatory episodes, but they also experience a gradual transition from observation to understanding as the text progresses from start to finish. This transition is the cumulative effect of the individual revelatory episodes upon the seer. For example, each of Ezra's revelatory episodes builds upon the preceding ones. Over the course of his first six revelatory episodes, Ezra gradually shifts from his human point of view to the divine point of view that the revelations are designed to instill within him.⁷¹ Likewise, Baruch's first seven revelatory episodes move him from his human point of view regarding his circumstances to the divine point of view commended in his visions.⁷² Similarly, the disciples move from observation to understanding within the individual narrative episodes of 4:1-20; 7:10-23; 9:14-29; 33-50; 10:1-12; 13:1-37; but they also transition from their initial imperception to an understanding of Jesus' messianic identity as the narrative progresses. Therefore, the statements regarding the disciples' imperception about the bread in 6:52 and 8:17-21—which actually highlight their imperception of Jesus' identity—should be regarded as preludes to what follows in the narrative. In this way, 6:52 and 8:17-21 emphasize the disciples' cognitive humanity in the face of a heavenly mystery—the mystery of the Messiah himself.⁷³

70. E.g., Joseph B. Tyson, "The Blindness of the Disciples in Mark," *JBL* 80 (1961): 261–68; T. J. Weeden, "The Heresy That Necessitated Mark's Gospel," *ZNW* 59 (1968): 145–58.

71. This transition is marked by Ezra's response of praise at the conclusion to episode 6 (*Ezra* 13:57-58), and his exhortations to the people between episodes 7 and 8 (14:34-35). Cf. Breech, "Form and Function," 272–74.

72. Baruch describes this transition and its implication in *2 Bar.* 81:1-83:23.

73. Thus, they function like Jesus' statements do in 4:13 and 7:18.

Peter's Confession.

Mark's narrative, however, does not abandon the disciples to the confines of their cognitive humanity, but shows that they progress to an understanding of Jesus' identity.⁷⁴ This is precisely the point of Peter's confession in 8:29. Jesus asks his disciples, "Who do people say that I am [τίνα με λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι]?" (8:27). Their answer to this question lists several of the human estimations of Jesus' identity that have been proffered to this point in the narrative—John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the prophets (8:28; cf. 6:14-15).⁷⁵ Next, Jesus asks who the disciples themselves think that he is, to which Peter replies, "You are the Christ [σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός]" (8:29). Although Mark's version does not explicitly attribute Peter's confession to revelation, as Matthew's famously does, there are a few reasons to conclude that this is implied.

First, the structure of the dialogue starkly contrasts Peter's estimation of Jesus, presented in 8:29, with those estimations presented in 8:28. The point is clear: Peter has perceived what has remained veiled from other humans thus far in the narrative—that Jesus is, in fact, the Messiah.⁷⁶ Second, we have observed that demonic spirits simply recognize that Jesus is the Messiah, as a result of their participation in the divine realm. Peter, therefore, has seemingly transcended the limitations of his cognitive humanity, as apocalyptic seers do, and achieved a divine perspective of Jesus' identity.⁷⁷ Third, the last point finds support in the strong

74. Perhaps this is alluded to by Jesus' question of 8:21: "Do you not yet understand [οὐκ ὁρᾶτε]?"

75. It is perhaps significant that Jesus asks who "people [οἱ ἄνθρωποι]" say that he is (8:27), not who the "crowds" say that he is. Might this reflect the contrast between the divine and human, as elsewhere? Cf. 7:7-9; 8:33.

76. Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 401; Perkins, *Peter*, 61. Cf. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 89, who says that Peter's confession displays "*Quickness of perception with regard to Jesus' identity* (relative to the disciples as a group) and *boldness of expression...*" (italics original).

77. Somewhat differently, David E. Aune, "Christian Prophecy and the Messianic Status of Jesus," in *Apocalypticism, Prophecy, and Magic in Early Christianity* (David E. Aune; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 309, identifies Peter's confession and the earlier demonic identifications of Jesus as "recognition oracles" that Jesus is divinely appointed to reign.

emphasis on the disciples' cognitive humanity leading up to Peter's confession. The narratorial comment of 6:52 and Jesus' statements in 8:17-21 function similarly within the overall progression of the narrative as do Jesus' statements of 4:13 and 7:18 within those individual episodes.⁷⁸ The point of 6:52 and 8:17-21 seems to be that the disciples' cognitive humanity has prevented them from perceiving Jesus' messianic identity, which was displayed in veiled form by his actions (particularly the miraculous feedings). With Peter's individual answer in 8:29, however, the implication is that the disciples have finally transcended their cognitive humanity, which was so prominent in the preceding narrative. Finally, Jesus warns them not to tell anyone about him (καὶ ἐπετίμησεν αὐτοῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ λέγωσιν περὶ αὐτοῦ [8:30]). This mirrors his practice of not allowing the demonic spirits to speak "because they knew who he was" (1:34; cf. 1:25; 3:11-12). For the disciples, the warning not to disclose Jesus' identity has no exorcistic functions.⁷⁹ Instead, it functions in the same way as the dissemination details found in the apocalypses, which reiterate that the divine mysteries revealed to the seer remain concealed from others, thereby highlighting the seer's exclusive access to such mysteries (e.g., Dan 7:28; 8:26; 12:4, 9; 4 Ezra 14:6, 26; 2 Bar. 20:3; 46:7; Rev 10:4; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 11:39).⁸⁰ Thus, like apocalyptic seers, the disciples are not to disclose their exclusive insight into the mystery of Jesus' identity.

Of the passages that have been handled thus far, this is the first where Peter's individual portrayal has been shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers.

78. Cf. Lemcio, "Structure and Function".

79. Cf. David E. Aune, "Magic in Early Christianity," in *Apocalypticism, Prophecy, and Magic in Early Christianity* (David E. Aune; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 392; Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 676.

80. Contra Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 648–49, who suggests that "the command to silence functions more to indicate a messianic misunderstanding [i.e., the popular understanding of Jesus as a Davidic Messiah] than a messianic secret." Freyne says that commands to silence addressed to the disciples "help to emphasise the hidden nature of revelation that is taking place in the present struggle that Jesus' ministry has inaugurated; they heighten the mood of expectation about the future, though imminent, end, and they highlight the gift-character of the disciples' experience" (Freyne, "Maskilim," 18).

Many view Peter's role as that of spokesman, since Jesus' question was directed towards the group.⁸¹ However, this is debatable since there is not any use of the first-person plural in his statement (cf. 10:28). For this reason, Wiarda and Bauckham are probably correct in rejecting that Peter acts as a spokesman here, but they maintain that he embodies for the reader what is typical of the disciples more generally.⁸² Regardless of whether one accepts or rejects that Peter functions as a spokesman in 8:29, he individually speaks, but he does so in close association with the group of disciples—they all are granted custodianship of the mystery in 8:30. Peter's individual prominence in conjunction with this confession perhaps suggests Mark's close association of Peter with the matter of Jesus' messianic identity. This notion is corroborated by the prominence of Peter in the following episodes as well.

The Transfiguration.

Mark's portrayal of Peter has been influenced by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers most strongly in the transfiguration episode.⁸³ Even though Peter

81. Brown, Donfried, and Reumann, *Peter in the New Testament*, 61, view Peter's confession as an expression of his role as spokesman. Haenchen also views Peter's role here as that of spokesman, and otherwise unimportant to the main focus of 8:27-9:1: "Bei Mk. spielt Petrus in diesem Abschnitt eine verhältnismäßig geringe Rolle. Er ist der Sprecher des Zwölferkreises. Als solcher bekennt er Jesus als den Christus. Aber im Vordergrund steht der dem Leiden entgegengehende Jesus (der darum den vor dem Leiden des Herrn zurückschreckenden Petrus hart anfahren muß) und die Gemeinde, die ebenfalls dem Leiden nicht ausweichen darf, wenn sie durch das Bekenntnis zu Jesus mit in das Todesleiden gerissen wird" (E. Haenchen, "Die Komposition von Mk. VII [read: VIII], 27-IX, 1 und Par.," *NovT* 6 [1963]: 107-8).

82. Wiarda, "Peter as Peter," 28-29, prefers to view Peter as an "opinion leader," which places more emphasis on Peter's confession as an expression of his individuality, rather than as a spokesman; cf. Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 166-67. Burkill sees Peter as functioning as "the representative of the elect" (Burkill, "Cryptology," 251).

83. Candida R. Moss, "The Transfiguration: An Exercise in Markan Accommodation," *BibInt* 12 (2004): 69-89 suggests that, in addition to the influence of Exod 24 and 1 Kgs 19, the transfiguration has been influenced by Hellenistic descriptions of epiphanies, and would have been heard as such by members of Mark's audience. Her basic claim about the mixture of influences is valid. However, based on the points made in the following discussion, the epiphanies recounted in the apocalypses, rather than the Hellenistic epiphanies that she cites, are perhaps the more likely influences on Mark's presentation of the transfiguration (in addition to Exod 24 and 1 Kgs 19). Robbins appropriately, though somewhat broadly, refers to the transfiguration as an "apocalyptic moment" in Jesus' ministry (Robbins, *Christian Discourse*, 453). We generally concur with Heil's identification of the transfiguration as an epiphany (John P. Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus: Narrative Meaning and Function of Mark 9:2-8, Matt 17:1-8 and Luke 9:28-36* [AnBib 144; Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000], 43-49). However, it is questionable whether

has correctly identified Jesus as the Messiah, the transfiguration more fully reveals Jesus' messianic identity to him.⁸⁴ Mark uses narrative isolation to portray Peter, James, and John as the exclusive recipients of what is revealed to them on the mountain: "Six days later [Καὶ μετὰ ἡμέρας ἑξ],⁸⁵ Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain [καὶ ἀναφέρει αὐτοὺς εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν] apart [κατ' ἰδίαν], by themselves [μόνους]" (9:2). This deployment of narrative isolation is more insistent than any other in Mark's Gospel, using the emphatic phrase, κατ' ἰδίαν μόνους, to signal their complete isolation,⁸⁶ and thus their supremely exclusive participation in this revelatory episode.⁸⁷ This emphasis matches the distinctively otherworldly tone of what they observe. They see Jesus transfigured (μετεμορφώθη) to his heavenly glory, which is the main point of the remark that "his clothes became radiant [καὶ τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο στίλβοντα], intensely white [λευκὰ λίαν], such as no launderer on earth could bleach them [οἷα γναφεὺς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς οὐ δύναται οὕτως λευκᾶναι]" (9:3).⁸⁸ Additionally, they see two

readers would have been able to further distinguish it as a "pivotal mandatory epiphany" (Ibid., 51–73).

84. The intervening episode of 8:31–38 will be handled below.

85. Charles Edwin Carlston, "Transfiguration and Resurrection," *JBL* 80 (1961): 236 observes that several "explicit datings in the Synoptics have to do with the Resurrection." This lends support to his view that the transfiguration is a misplaced post-resurrection appearance. However, Carlston overlooks the fact that chronological markers such as this frequently appear in the apocalypses, and their function is to link one revelatory episode to the preceding narrative, and to signal that the recipients of revelation have been appropriately sanctified leading up to the disclosure (cf. Dan 10:2–4; 4 *Ezra* 5:21; 6:35; 9:27; 11:1; 13:1; 14:1, 38; 2 *Bar.* 6:1; 10:1; 12:5–13:1; 21:1; 48:1; 77:18). Some of these, especially in 4 *Ezra*, seem to be based on Moses' encounter with Yahweh following six days of preparatory fasting on the mountain (Exod 24:16). Therefore, the chronological marker in Mark 9:2 is a feature that is common to many revelatory episodes, especially those in the apocalypse genre, not just those that have to do with the resurrection in the Synoptics. It may imply that Peter, James, and John have been appropriately sanctified following Peter's satanic rejection of Jesus' messianic mode (discussed below).

86. Cf. ὅτε ἐγένετο κατὰ μόνας (4:10); κατ' ἰδίαν (4:34; 6:31, 32; 9:28; 13:3); Καὶ ὅτε εἰσῆλθεν εἰς οἶκον ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου (7:17); καὶ οὐκ ἤθελεν ἵνα τις γνοῖ (9:30); Καὶ εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν πάλιν (10:10); καὶ παραλαβὼν πάλιν τοὺς δώδεκα (10:32).

87. Cf. Danny Karl Wilson, "Old Testament Apocalypticism as a Source of the Messianic Secret: A Traditio-Historical Study of the Synoptic Transfiguration Narratives" (Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1995), 112, who notes the similarity between 9:2 and Dan 10:8.

88. In the apocalypses, garments frequently symbolize heavenly glory, or the heavenly body (*1 En.* 62:15–16; *2 En.* 22:8; *Apoc. Ab.* 13:14; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 8:14–15, 26; 9:2, 9, 11, 17–18, 24–

of Judaism's most venerable figures with Jesus. This is similar to some revelatory episodes in the apocalypses where apocalyptic seers glimpse or hear a description of the righteous in their ultimate abode (e.g., *Apoc. Zeph.* 9:3-5). Sometimes, such visions depict the righteous as dwelling with the Messiah (*4 Ezra* 13:52; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 9:6-9, 27-28). Finally, they hear the divine voice confirm Jesus' messianic identity: "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him! [οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ]" (9:7).

At the conclusion of the transfiguration, Jesus provides dissemination details to the three disciples: "As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen [διεστείλατο αὐτοῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ ᾧ εἶδον διηγῶνται], until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead [εἰ μὴ ὅταν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῇ]" (9:9).⁸⁹ Moreover, Mark reports that "[t]hey kept the matter to themselves [καὶ τὸν λόγον ἐκράτησαν πρὸς ἑαυτοῦς]" (9:10). These dissemination details function exactly as those in the apocalypses do, emphasizing that Peter, James, and John are the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries (i.e., Jesus' heavenly glory as the Messiah), and providing them with specific instructions concerning when they should secondarily disclose the mysteries to others.⁹⁰

26; 11:40; *Apoc. Zeph.* 8:3; *5 Ezra* 2:45); cf. Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus*, 84–90.

89. Danove concludes that, based on Mark's narrative repetition of the phrase 'speak to no one' with seemingly negative associations (cf. 1:44; 7:36; 16:8), "[t]he women's failure to speak also impacts the presentation of the disciples, for Jesus stated in 9:9 that Peter, James and John were not to narrate (διηγεσθαι) the event of his transfiguration to anyone (μηδενι) except when he is raised from the dead...The women's failure to speak the young man's message to the disciples and Peter removes the possibility within the narrative for Peter, James and John to narrate the events of the transfiguration, thereby extending the apprehension of irony to the disciples and Peter. This contributes to the disciples' concluding negative valuation" (Paul L. Danove, "The Narrative Rhetoric of Mark's Ambiguous Characterization of the Disciples," *JSNT* 70 [1998]: 32). However, based on the similarities between 9:9, which appears at the conclusion of a revelatory episode, and the dissemination details found in the apocalypses, it is much more likely that Mark intended for 9:9 to contribute to these three disciples' portrayals as apocalyptic seers, which is an especially positive status within first-century Judaism.

90. Mark 9:9 was the foundational text for Wrede's Messianic Secret theory: "Eine verhältnismässig wenig beachtete Stelle liefert den Schlüssel für die Anschauung. Mir ist sie wenigstens recht eigentlich der Ausgangspunkt für die Erkenntnis dieser ganzen Gedankenreihen gewesen, und insofern halte ich sie für eins der wichtigsten Worte, die Markus geschrieben hat" (D. W. Wrede, *Das Messiasgeheimnis in Den Evangelien: Zugleich ein Beitrag Zum Verständnis Des*

Therefore, through narrative isolation and dissemination details, Mark portrays these three disciples as the exclusive recipients of Jesus' revealed messianic glory, which will be manifest to all at his eschatological 'coming' (cf. 8:38), when the kingdom of God comes with power (cf. 9:1).

During this revelatory episode, Peter reacts in the normal manner of a seer encountering the glories of the heavenly realm;⁹¹ he does not want the encounter to end.⁹² "Rabbi, it is good to be here [καλὸν ἐστὶν ἡμᾶς ὧδε εἶναι]. Let us make three tabernacles [καὶ ποιήσωμεν τρεῖς σκηνάς]..." (9:5; cf. *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 8:23, 27-28).⁹³ Peter's proposal is an expression of his cognitive and emotional humanity: "He did not know what to say [οὐ γὰρ ᾔδει τί ἀποκριθῆ], for they were terrified [ἐκφοβοὶ γὰρ ἐγένοντο]" (9:6).⁹⁴ It is interesting that Peter's cognitive humanity solely features

Markusevangeliums [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1901], 66). However, Schmithals correctly observes the importance of 14:61-64, which qualifies the significance that Wrede attached to Mark 9:9 with regard to his theory: "Man berief sich für diese christologische Metatheorie gerne wie in anderer Weise schon Wrede auf Jesu Schweigegebot in Markus 9:9, das bis Ostern in Geltung stehen sollte, übersah dabei aber wie auch Wrede, dass Jesus selbst sich schon vor dem Hohen Rat demonstrativ zu seiner Messianität bekennt (Mk 14:61-64) und dass dies öffentliche Bekenntnis von großem Gewicht ist, den weiteren Verlauf der Passionsgeschichte bestimmt und zu Jesu Verurteilung führt" (Walter Schmithals, "Das Messiasgeheimnis und die Spruchquelle," *HTS* 64 [2008]: 355-56). For this and other reasons, Schmithals states that "Markus 14:61-64, nicht Markus 9:9 ist der wahre Schlüsseltext der Messiasgeheimnistheorie" (Ibid., 356). Hawkin highlights the importance of 4:12, since in his estimation, "it is the only text in the entire Gospel of Mark which gives the 'why' of the messianic secret. The crowds are not entrusted with the inner sense of Jesus' words because God does not will this" (Hawkin, "Incomprehension," 497-98). Wilson concurs with Wrede's starting point of Mark 9:9, but concludes that the verbal parallels between the transfiguration and apocalyptic writings in the OT support the possibility that Jesus himself used secrecy during his ministry (Wilson, "Apocalypticism," 103-201, esp. 109).

91. Cf. Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 424-25.

92. Cf. Carlston, "Transfiguration and Resurrection," 239; Marcus, *Mark 8-16*, 638; Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus*, 143.

93. Brown, Donfried, and Reumann, *Peter in the New Testament*, 66; Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus*, 158-59, view Peter's proposal as an expression of his role as spokesman. On the other hand, Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 166, does not view Peter as a spokesman here, but as typical for the disciples in his individual initiative.

94. Cf. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 43. By overlooking the fact that Peter and the other two disciples are responding to the transfiguration in the normal manner of apocalyptic seers (cf. Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus*, 54-55), several scholars view Peter's confusion and/or their fear as a negative element of their portrayal. E.g., Danove, "The Narrative Rhetoric of Mark's Ambiguous Characterization of the Disciples," 31. Cf. also Ernest Best, *Disciples and Discipleship: Studies in the Gospel According to Mark* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986), 215-16; Marcus, *Mark 8-16*, 635, 638-39.

here, despite the fact that all of the disciples experience the typical fear of apocalyptic seers. This extends the special focus on Peter that was apparent in his confession (cf. 8:29; cf. also vv. 32-33), and suggests that Mark associated Peter especially with the mystery of Jesus' messianic identity. As is often the case in apocalypses and in Mark's Gospel, emphasis on the seer's (or disciples') cognitive humanity normally precedes an explanation of what eludes human comprehension. Thus, as Heil suggests, the divine voice has an oracular function of interpreting and correcting Peter's proposal: "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him! [οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ]" (9:7).⁹⁵ The divine voice elevates Jesus above Moses and Elijah,⁹⁶ whose significance is likely related to the bodies of authoritative revelation that they represent.⁹⁷ This explanation mitigates Peter's cognitive humanity, since God has identified Jesus as the primary source authorized revelation.⁹⁸ The otherworldly aspect of the revelatory episode then concludes, and the disciples are alone again with Jesus (9:8; cf. *Herm.* 9:3-5; Tob 12:21).⁹⁹ However, their cognitive humanity surfaces again when Jesus provides instructions about the secondary disclosure of this revelatory episode. Mark highlights their confusion by narrating that "[t]hey were discussing 'what is the resurrection of the

95. Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus*, 132–43.

96. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 79; Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus*, 143. However, if there is an intentional allusion to Deut 18:15, as the marginal note in NA²⁷ suggests, then the purpose of the divine voice is to align Jesus with Moses and Elijah. But the fact that Peter's proposal has clearly aligned Jesus with them as an equal already makes it probable that the divine voice is more concerned with distinguishing him from them (so Adela Yarbro Collins and John J. Collins, *King and Messiah as Son of God: Divine, Human, and Angelic Messianic Figures in Biblical and Related Literature* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2008], 131). This is corroborated by the fact that the voice identifies him not merely as a prophet (cf. Deut 18:15), but as "Son" and "Beloved." Moreover, Moses and Elijah disappear.

97. Heil's proposal that their significance is related to their attainment of heavenly glory in a different manner than Jesus (Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus*, 95–113) is not necessarily at odds with the interpretation that their significance is related to their association with revelation from God.

98. Cf. *Ibid.*, 142–43, 149. The divine voice also confirms to Peter, James, and John that Peter's identification of Jesus as the Messiah is correct, even though Jesus insists that he must be rejected, suffer, and die.

99. καὶ ἐξάπινα περιβλεψάμενοι οὐκέτι οὐδένα εἶδον ἀλλὰ τὸν Ἰησοῦν μόνον μεθ' ἑαυτῶν (9:8).

dead? [τί ἐστὶν τὸ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆναι;]” (9:10).¹⁰⁰

Even though Peter’s proposal to build three tabernacles arose from his cognitive humanity, it was probably based on his presupposition that Elijah would come before the Messiah. Yet, since no tabernacle was needed for Elijah or Moses, this naturally leads to the disciples’ question in 9:11: “Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” This question reflects their cognitive humanity with regard to the mysterious fulfillment of the prophecies in Mal 3:1; 4:5[3:23 MT; 3:22 LXX] and Isa 40:3 (cf. Mark 1:2-3, which cites Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3 with reference to John). Jesus explains that Elijah does come to restore all things, and that he has come and experienced the suffering that the Son of Man himself must experience (9:12-13). This answer addresses the cognitive humanity expressed by these three disciples, and supplies them with inspired exegesis concerning the fulfillment of prophecy. Thus, Jesus’ explanation functions similarly to the inspired exegesis of Jeremiah’s prophecy that the angel Gabriel delivers to Daniel (cf. Dan 9), and the inspired exegesis of Daniel’s prophecy that the angel Uriel delivers to Ezra (cf. *4 Ezra* 12:10-35).

Therefore, through the use of narrative isolation and dissemination details, Mark has portrayed Peter, James, and John as the exclusive recipients of revealed heavenly mysteries: the heavenly appearance of the Messiah in the company of the righteous, and God’s confirmation of Jesus’ messianic identity. These disciples exhibit the cognitive and emotional humanity that are typical of apocalyptic seers during such encounters with the divine realm.¹⁰¹ Peter’s cognitive humanity features uniquely in his proposal to build three tents,¹⁰² and the divine voice explains that Jesus, as God’s Son, is the one through whom God speaks to them. The disciples’

100. Heil is probably correct that their confusion was not about the general resurrection of the dead, but about the way that this specifically applied to Jesus as the Son of Man (Ibid., 175–76).

101. Cf. Wilson, “Apocalypticism,” 119–20.

102. Cf. Wiarda, “Peter as Peter,” 30; Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 169.

cognitive humanity features again in their incomprehension of what Jesus meant by “resurrection of the dead.” Nor do they perceive how the prophecies concerning Elijah are fulfilled. Although they do not receive an explanation of the resurrection of the Son of Man, Jesus does provide them with inspired exegesis of the Elijah prophecies. Finally, the disciples’ emotional humanity is manifest in their fearful response to what they observe on the mountain. Their responses are seen to be normal ones when viewed against the backdrop of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers. For this reason, it is once again inaccurate to flatly conclude that their reactions are negative or improper¹⁰³—they are best understood simply as manifestations of cognitive, emotional, and physical humanity common to apocalyptic seers.

Jesus’ Messianic Mode

Peter’s confession establishes that the disciples’ have transcended their cognitive humanity with regard to Jesus’ identity. However, despite Peter’s correct identification of Jesus, his cognitive humanity persists in part, preventing him from understanding the true nature of Jesus’ mode of messiahship, which first requires suffering as the Son of Man,¹⁰⁴ and then culminates in his resurrection.¹⁰⁵ Yet, just as apocalyptic seers progress towards a divine perspective in the apocalypses, so also do the disciples progress towards an understanding of the mode or manner in which

103. Cf. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 155–56; Lee, despite his correct observation that fear is a standard human response to an epiphany, incorrectly remarks that this fear in such contexts is “improper” (Simon S. Lee, *Jesus’ Transfiguration and the Believers’ Transformation* [WUNT 2.265; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009], 14); Brown, Donfried, and Reumann, *Peter in the New Testament*, 61, view Peter’s confusion as supporting the “dark side” of the Markan Peter; Smith, *Petrine Controversies in Early Christianity. Attitudes Towards Peter in Christian Writings of the First Two Centuries*, 172, incorrectly interprets 9:6 as Mark’s demonstration of Peter’s “stupidity.” Cf. also the comments of Klauck, “Die Rolle,” esp. 23, who also recognizes that the motif of the disciples’ fear in the tradition is related to the typical reactions of revelation-recipients.

104. For a discussion of the relationship between, and significance of, the messianic titles, “Messiah,” “Son of God,” and “Son of Man” in Mark’s Gospel, see Collins and Collins, *Son of God*, 126–34.

105. “[A]fter the confession (8:30-33) the understanding of the disciples shifts from imperceptivity to misconception” (Weeden, “Heresy,” 146).

Jesus is the Messiah.¹⁰⁶ This progression is brought about by a rebuke from Jesus, and successive installments of Jesus' plain teaching concerning his fate as the Son of Man.

The Fate of the Son of Man in Plain Teaching.

Apocalyptic seers often express a human point of view that is essentially different than the divine point of view that their revelatory episodes are designed to inculcate. Similarly, just after his confession of Jesus' messianic identity, Peter expresses a human point of view regarding Jesus' messianic mode. This human point of view is displayed in Peter's response to Jesus' first installment of teaching that the Son of Man must suffer, be rejected and killed, and then rise again (8:31). Mark's narratorial comment that Jesus "plainly spoke about the matter [καὶ παρρησίᾳ τὸν λόγον ἐλάλει]" (8:32) signals that he did not veil this matter in enigmatic proclamation, but plainly presented it to the disciples.¹⁰⁷ Since the disciples are alone with Jesus (cf. 8:30), this plain teaching seems to be considered among the πάντα that Jesus explained to them in private settings, away from the crowds (cf. 4:34). Peter rebukes (ἐπιτιμάω) Jesus when he hears that the mode of Jesus' messiahship involves suffering and death (8:32). Jesus responds by rebuking (ἐπιτιμάω) Peter in return; his rebuke emphasizes that Peter is acting in an adversarial manner. Peter's conception of Jesus' messiahship, which excludes suffering and death, is fundamentally a human one¹⁰⁸ that stands in direct opposition to God's perspective on the matter:¹⁰⁹ "Get

106. Contra Tyson, "Blindness".

107. παρρησία can mean 'openness', connoting that Jesus spoke this matter publicly (BDAG #5720). But since the setting is likely one of privacy (cf. 8:30), and elsewhere Jesus reiterates this teaching in explicitly private settings (cf. 9:30-31; 10:32-34; 14:17-25), the sense of 'plainness' is more likely.

108. It is difficult to determine the degree to which Jesus' rebuke of Peter as σατανᾶς should be viewed as a rebuke for reflecting a demonic, or Satanic point of view about Jesus' messianic mode. Of course, σατανᾶς can be translated merely as 'adversary' rather than as a proper name of the devil, 'Satan' (e.g., 1 Kgs 11:14; Sir 21:27). In support of translating σατανᾶς in Mark 8:33 as 'adversary', the remainder of the verse elaborates that Peter's thoughts are τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, 'the things of humans' or 'human things', which are directly contrasted with τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, 'the things of God' or 'divine things'. Therefore, the main point of Jesus' rebuke of Peter seems to center on a contrast between a human point of view—not a demonic or Satanic point of

behind me, adversary [ὑπάγε ὀπίσω μου, σατανᾶ]! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things [ὅτι οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων]” (8:33).¹¹⁰ Thus, Peter’s cognitive humanity has prevented him from arriving at a correct conception of Jesus’ mode of messiahship.¹¹¹ Indeed, if Peter is to think the things of God, he must allow his conception of Jesus’ messianic mode to be recalibrated by Jesus’ plain teaching concerning his fate as the Son of Man. Although the disciples alone hear that Jesus’ must suffer and die in 8:31, Jesus publicly teaches that discipleship requires suffering to the point of death in the following context. Whether one does so or not determines one’s eschatological fate when the Son of Man comes in glory (8:34-38). This episode is the second of three (i.e., the confession, the rebuke, the transfiguration) in which Peter features especially prominently in connection with Jesus’ messianic identity and mode.¹¹²

Additional ‘Plain’ Teaching.

Beyond this initial installment of plain teaching concerning Jesus’ fate as the Son of Man, the disciples receive two more installments of such plain teaching (i.e., 9:30-32; 10:32-34). These additional installments of plain teaching essentially repeat the message of the first installment (i.e., 8:31-32) and Jesus’ comments to the three disciples on their way down from the mount of transfiguration (cf. 9:9, 12)—that the

view—about Jesus’ messianic mode, and the divine view of it that Jesus’ private teaching is designed to establish within the disciples. Although this is probably the most that can be drawn from Mark’s use of σατανᾶς in 8:33, in view of Mark’s use of this word elsewhere as a proper name for the devil (1:13; 3:23, 26; 4:15), it is nevertheless striking that *this term* is used here, when it surely could have been avoided. With this term, Mark may want to imply that Peter’s human point of view is ultimately aligned with Satan’s opposition to the work of God. Even if this is the case, it should not be overlooked that Jesus explicitly refers to Peter’s thoughts as human thoughts, which is why we have classified Peter’s rebuke of Jesus as an expression of his cognitive humanity.

109. Cf. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 75.

110. “[D]ivine things” or “the things of God [τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ]” here could connote the secret purposes of God that are concealed from humanity, as in 1 Cor 2:11 (see BDAG # 3538). If so, the statement would allude to the mystery of the kingdom of God in Mark 4:11.

111. Perkins, *Peter*, 57, holds that Peter represents the opposition of the disciples to Jesus’ suffering fate as the Son of Man.

112. Wiarda, “Peter as Peter,” 29–30, correctly observes the individuality of Peter in this episode, which militates against the view that he acts as spokesman for the group of disciples; he is closely followed by Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 167.

Son of Man will suffer, die, and then rise again. The next two installments also occur in private settings. Thus, in 9:30-31, Mark reports that, while passing through Galilee, Jesus “did not want anyone to know it [καὶ οὐκ ἤθελεν ἵνα τις γνοῖ]; for he was teaching his disciples.” Likewise, in 10:32-34, Mark reports that, while on the way to Jerusalem, Jesus “took the twelve aside again [καὶ παραλαβὼν πάλιν τοὺς δώδεκα] and began to tell them what was to happen to him.” Therefore, Mark again uses narrative isolation to portray the disciples as the exclusive recipients of these installments of plain teaching concerning Jesus’ fate as the Son of Man.¹¹³

Just as Peter’s cognitive humanity features prominently following the first installment of this plain teaching (cf. 8:32-33), and just as the three disciples did not understand what Jesus meant by his reference to the Son of Man’s resurrection from the dead (cf. 9:9-10), the disciples also exhibit their cognitive humanity in response to Jesus’ plain teaching in 9:30-32. Jesus tells the disciples that “[t]he Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again” (9:31). Mark then highlights both the cognitive and emotional humanity of the disciples: “But they did not understand the saying [οἱ δὲ ἡγγνόουν τὸ ῥῆμα], and were afraid to ask him [καὶ ἐφοβοῦντο αὐτὸν ἐπερωτῆσαι]” (9:32). Therefore, in the face of Jesus’ plain teaching about his fate as the Son of Man in 9:30-32, the disciples exhibit the cognitive and emotional humanity that is typical of apocalyptic seers during encounters with the mysteries of the divine realm. Yet, the last installment of this plain teaching in 10:32-34 does not highlight any aspect of the disciples’ humanity.

Conclusion

This section has argued that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, and as humans encountering the divine

113. Cf. Robbins, *Christian Discourse*, 454.

realm, has shaped Mark's portrayal of Peter in connection with Jesus' messianic identity and mode. Mark's portrayal of Peter and the disciples includes narrative isolation, dissemination details, cognitive-, emotional-, and physical humanity that are characteristic of apocalyptic seers in the apocalypse genre. In contrast with Jesus' enigmatic proclamation, where no special focus is given to Peter, Mark does focus especially on Peter with regard to Jesus' messianic identity and mode. Peter voices the messianic confession in 8:27, and he expresses cognitive humanity in 8:32 and 9:5-6.

The point was made that Jesus' messianic identity is a mystery of the divine realm, since divine beings readily recognize him as the Messiah, but human estimations of his identity fall short. Like all other humans, the disciples' cognitive humanity prevents them from immediately recognizing that Jesus is the Messiah. Peter is presented as the first human to cross the threshold of cognitive humanity, and to correctly identify Jesus as the Messiah (8:27). Mark highlights the disciples' exclusive insight into Jesus' messianic identity by way of the dissemination details that immediately follow Peter's confession (8:30). Therefore, like apocalyptic seers who conceal the mysteries that have been disclosed to them, and like the demonic beings who know Jesus' identity, Peter and the disciples are not to tell anyone about Jesus' messianic identity. Similarly, when Peter, James, and John see Jesus' heavenly glory and hear God confirm his messianic status, they are not permitted to secondarily transmit this revelatory insight until Jesus' resurrection. Indeed, they keep the matter to themselves.

Despite his insight into Jesus' messianic identity, Peter's conception of Jesus' messianic mode remains limited to his human point of view. He envisages a fate for Jesus that excludes rejection, suffering, death, and resurrection. When Jesus rebukes Peter for thinking human things rather than the things of God (8:33), he makes the point that his fate as the suffering Son of Man is a matter that has been firmly

established by God. Even though the disciples fail to understand Jesus' plain references to his resurrection (9:9-10; 9:32), they do come to grips with Jesus' teaching that he must suffer.¹¹⁴ This is corroborated by the assumption of James and John that they, like Jesus, can participate in his ominous fate, so as to participate in his glorious reign (cf. 10:35-40); Peter also avows his loyalty unto death (14:31). Yet, there are no hints in Mark's narrative that the disciples came to understand what Jesus meant by his references to rising from the dead. Therefore, the disciples' human point of view regarding Jesus' messianic mode is not fully adjusted until his resurrection appearances to them, which are only alluded to by the angel's words to the women: "But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you" (16:7; cf. 14:28). Thus, Mark's readers were required to rely on tradition external to Mark's narrative world, and their own knowledge of the reputations of Peter and the disciples, to infer that they indeed overcame their cognitive humanity with regard to the resurrection of the Messiah.

Conclusions

This chapter has established that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers, as a feature of the apocalypse genre, has influenced Mark's portrayal of Peter as a member of the larger groups of disciples to which he belongs, and as an individual. This influence is especially apparent in connection with Jesus' enigmatic proclamation and the matter of Jesus' messianic identity and mode.

114. Contra Tyson, "Blindness," esp. 265, who argues that the disciples never come to grips with Jesus' suffering, but envisage his messiahship in a royal, nationalistic paradigm. For this reason, Tyson views Mark's portrayal of the disciples' incomprehension as polemical in nature (ultimately against the Jerusalem church), reflecting Mark's convictions that the disciples "have a narrow view of the Messiahship of Jesus which involves an inflated understanding of their own position," and that "they do not have a profound enough understanding of the significance of the death of Jesus" (Ibid., 268). Weeden follows Tyson in detecting a polemic against the disciples (Weeden, "Heresy," 147), who represent a *θετος ἀνήρ* christological heresy in Mark's community.

1. The exclusionary statements in the apocalypses, which assert the seer's exclusive access to mysteries of the divine realm, provide the precedent for exclusionary statements that are found in Mark's Gospel. Jesus, in the manner of one mediating divine revelation to an exclusive seer, utters an exclusionary statement in 4:11, which is echoed by Mark's narrative comment in 4:34. Together, these two exclusionary statements assert that the disciples are the exclusive recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God in contradistinction to all others. Thus, the group of disciples are essentially put forward as apocalyptic seers, collectively occupying the role that the apocalypses reserve for an individual seer. Revelation of the mystery of the kingdom of God is delivered through Jesus' private explanations to his disciples. The visions and explanations presented in the apocalypses seem to have provided the model for Mark's paradigm of parable and explanation as the mode through which mysteries are revealed. Although the parables and explanations are essentially this-worldly, this mode of revelation most closely resembles Ezra's interaction with the angel Uriel in *4 Ezra*, which is episodic like Mark's narrative, and is primarily characterized by question and answer dialogue on the this-worldly plane.

2. Narrative isolation in the apocalypses provided the impetus for Mark's use of narrative isolation to construct many private, revelatory settings wherein the disciples are isolated with Jesus apart from other humans. In some of these isolated settings, the disciples receive Jesus' explanations of his enigmatic proclamation, which disclose to them various aspects of the mystery of the kingdom of God (4:10, 34; 7:17; 9:28, 33; 10:10; 13:3). Elsewhere, these isolated settings are closely related to the theme of Jesus' messianic identity, which is itself a mystery of the divine realm beyond the reach of cognitive humanity (9:2; cf. 8:27-30). Finally, while isolated with Jesus, the disciples receive installments of Jesus' plain teaching about his fate as the Son of Man (9:30-31; 10:32; cf. 8:31-33; 9:11-13). This teaching corrects the

disciples' point of view regarding Jesus' messianic mode. Therefore, like the apocalypses, Mark uses narrative isolation extensively to support the portrayal of the disciples as the exclusive recipients of these mysterious aspects of Jesus' identity and ministry. This most closely resembles the deployment of narrative isolation in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* among the apocalypses surveyed in Part 1.

3. Dissemination details in the apocalypses seem to stand behind Mark's 'Messianic Secret'.¹¹⁵ Mark includes dissemination details immediately after Peter correctly

115. In Wrede's estimation, Jesus' command in Mark 9:9 that the disciples not disclose what they have seen until after the resurrection betrays the primary motivation for the secrecy motif as a whole. According to Wrede, the secrecy motif was a product of later theology which compensates for the reality that, during Jesus' historical ministry, he did not proclaim himself as the Messiah, nor was he known as such. As a result, Mark's Gospel was not a clear picture of the historical Jesus at all, but a somewhat naïve expression of post-Easter theology written back onto the life of Jesus. Although this study is not concerned primarily with assessments of the historical verisimilitude of Gospel traditions, there are a few relevant comments to make about Wrede's claims in light of the preceding discussion of Mark's portrayal of Peter and the disciples.

The present study suggests that the features of Mark's Gospel that Wrede associates with the secrecy motif—commands to silence, private settings for teaching the disciples, Jesus identifying the disciples as recipients of revelation, and the disciples' lack of understanding—are all features that have parallel in the apocalypses. More specifically, these features are associated with the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, and as humans encountering the mysteries and beings of the divine realm. Since most of the apocalypses are pseudonymous, and so project later theology into an earlier historical setting (deceptively?), this raises the question of whether the present research lends further support to Wrede's thesis. In other words, if Mark's portrayal of Peter and the disciples was shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers, does this support Wrede's view that Mark's Gospel projects a post-Easter theological conviction about Jesus' identity onto the historical events of Jesus' life? There are a few points that suggest a negative answer to this question.

First, Wrede did not seem to realize that the motif of secrecy was a regular feature of the apocalypses, and that the apocalypses could provide the real key to the presence of this motif in Mark's Gospel, rather than a fundamental disagreement between the theological convictions of the post-Easter church and the events of Jesus' ministry. In other words, secrecy already had rhetorical significance during the life of Jesus, and he may have employed the rhetoric of secrecy to his own ends. Indeed, if a first-century Jew such as Jesus had wanted to classify something as revelation from God for his followers, we have every reason to believe that he could have employed the rhetoric of the apocalypses towards this end. To use injunctions to secrecy, exclusionary statements, and intentional moments of private instruction was to say, "you are receiving revelation." Thus, Mark's secrecy motif may not have its origin in the post-Easter church, but in the rhetoric employed by Jesus himself.

Second, beyond the possibility that Jesus used the rhetoric of secrecy in his ministry, it is likely that the disciples, as the eyewitnesses to his ministry, used the motif of secrecy in their earliest retellings of traditions about Jesus. This again is something that Wrede ignores because he does not recognize the rhetorical significance that secrecy had in the apocalypses already during Jesus' ministry. Wrede distinguishes historical events from theology in a way that assumes the latter

identifies Jesus as the Messiah (8:30). Thus, the disciples, like the demons who know Jesus' messianic identity, are not permitted to tell others.¹¹⁶ Dissemination details also appears at the conclusion to the transfiguration. Jesus instructs Peter, James, and John not to disclose what they have seen until the resurrection (9:9-10). Mark narrates that they indeed kept the matter to themselves, so exhibiting appropriate custodianship of revealed mysteries in the manner of seers such as Daniel.¹¹⁷ Elsewhere in the narrative, Jesus does command other characters to conceal whatever

attaches itself to the former only after a substantial amount of time has passed. In other words, it is only in the post-Easter scenario that Jesus' identity as the Messiah is realized, and so begins to attach to the events of his ministry in the tradition (and eventually in the Gospels). Yet, it is more probable that the eyewitnesses to Jesus' ministry, namely his disciples, already attached theological significance to the events that they witnessed immediately after the event itself—even if the full theological significance and implications of the event were not realized until after the resurrection. To be certain, in first-century Judaism, some things could not have been interpreted except through theological lenses by the eyewitnesses themselves. If this is the case, then it likely follows that, from the beginning, the disciples, as witnesses to the events of Jesus' ministry, relayed what they had witnessed in such a way as to draw out the theological significance that they themselves had initially perceived in the event. For example, when Jesus explained parables to his disciples during his ministry, the disciples might have arrived at the conviction that they were receiving more than just explanations of teaching, but the revelation of mysteries. In order to draw out that this was what they perceived to be happening, in their own retellings of Jesus' teaching, they may have included and emphasized rhetorical features that would have underscored to first-century ears that they had indeed received revelation from Jesus. It is possible, then, that Mark's use of exclusionary statements, narrative isolation, dissemination details, and his emphasis of the disciples' cognitive humanity stems not from some nebulous post-Easter theology, but from the participants in Jesus' ministry, and so reproduces rhetorical features which had always been present in the retelling of certain events or teaching. The point is that Wrede's neat distinction between the events of Jesus' life and the theological convictions about him is more than a little contrived.

Finally, the secrecy motif serves a wider range of purposes for Mark's audience than what Wrede recognized. The apocalypses clarify that the last days are the appropriate time for the disclosure of revelation that had previously remained secret. Therefore, the point that the disciples received exclusive revelation from Jesus, which could not be disclosed until the resurrection, primarily serves the purpose of reiterating that Jesus' resurrection ushers in the last days. Thus, the disciples' apostolic ministry in the post-Easter scenario is shown to have the same significance as what is envisaged in some apocalypses, such as Daniel and *1 Enoch*, where the wise terminal audience discloses their insight into the mysteries of God. Mark's secrecy motif may be more concerned with making the point that Mark's audience lived in the last days, than it was with making the point that the beliefs of Mark's audience about Jesus were already held by some during his historical ministry. And if one ultimately concludes with Wrede that the secrecy motif is entirely the creation of the post-Easter church (and Mark), this conclusion does not automatically lead to Wrede's argument that Jesus was not conceived of as the Messiah until after Easter. In other words, Jesus could have been widely conceived of as the Messiah during his historical ministry, but the secrecy motif had the aim of authorizing the disciples as those in the post-Easter scenario with exclusive revelation from and about Jesus.

116. Cf. 1:24-25, 34; 3:11-12.

117. Cf. Dan 7:28; *T. Levi* 6:2; 8:18-19; 2 *Bar.* 46:7.

aspect of his ministry they have witnessed.¹¹⁸ Yet, it is never clear that these characters view him as the Messiah, and Jesus' injunctions in such contexts seem to be aimed at controlling the swelling crowds, rather than concealing his messianic identity—though no sharp division between the two motivations exists. Nonetheless, the dissemination details associated with the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers have influenced Mark's portrayal of the disciples as the exclusive human custodians of the mysteries of Jesus' messianic identity and mode.

4. When apocalyptic seers encounter the mysteries and beings of the divine realm, their humanity features especially prominently. On account of their cognitive humanity, they do not understand what is revealed to them apart from divine explanation. This aspect of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has shaped Mark's portrayal of the disciples. Thus, even though the disciples have been granted the mystery of the kingdom of God, they require explanations of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation in order to transition from observation to understanding. Moreover, Jesus draws attention to the disciples' cognitive humanity at several points. Twice, he seems to be surprised that the disciples require an explanation of his enigmatic proclamation (4:13; 7:18). When the disciples fail to perceive his messianic identity, he speaks harshly of their cognitive humanity (8:17-18, 21). Even when Jesus plainly teaches about his fate as the Son of Man, the disciples still exhibit the cognitive humanity that is typical of apocalyptic seers during their encounters with the divine realm (8:33; 9:9-10, 32). Finally, there are two points in the narrative where the disciples exhibit the fear that is normal of apocalyptic seers (9:6, 32).

5. With regard to the disciples' incomprehension, the predominant scholarly opinion has been that this motif is at odds with Jesus' designation of them as those to whom

118. See 1:44; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26; cf. 10:48.

the mystery of the kingdom of God had been given. However, as we have noted, this fails to observe that, in the apocalypses, apocalyptic seers are almost always utterly dependent upon divine explanations in order to achieve understanding of whatever matter is in view. In other words, humans with exclusive access to divine mysteries regularly exhibit cognitive humanity that flags the limits of their unassisted human comprehension. Moreover, although Jesus' responses to the disciples' cognitive humanity are certainly not positive, they represent the standard responses of a divine mediator of revelation in the face of cognitive humanity. For this reason—and on account of the fact that the apocalyptic seers to whom such responses are directed are almost always venerable figures—we should avoid the simplistic conclusion that the motif of the disciples' incomprehension reflects a negative or polemical aspect of Mark's portrayal of them. Instead, their incomprehension must be understood as part of their larger portrayal as apocalyptic seers who, in some sense, encounter the mysteries of the divine realm. Here again, the portrayal of Ezra in *4 Ezra* is helpful. Ezra's cognitive humanity is a specific point of discussion (and contention) taken up by the mediator of revelation, yet Ezra exclusively receives disclosures of divine mysteries that others do not. Although it would certainly be more flattering if characters such as Ezra or the disciples did not require explanations of divine mysteries, this would actually compromise the rhetorical presentation of the mysteries themselves as matters that lie beyond the reach of unaided human comprehension. Thus, the incomprehension of the disciples supports their portrayal as apocalyptic seers, since it triggers Jesus' explanations and further disclosures.

6. In contrast with Mark's presentation of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation, his presentation of Jesus' messianic identity and mode does include individual focus on Peter. Peter is the first human to correctly identify Jesus as the Messiah, though the group of disciples shares his perception to some degree since they are all charged

with its concealment.¹¹⁹ During the transfiguration, Peter's cognitive humanity alone features in his proposal to build three shelters. However, Mark's statement that "[h]e did not know what to say, for they were terrified" (9:6) closely relates Peter's cognitive humanity to the fear experienced by all three. Peter alone rebukes Jesus for teaching that he would suffer and die; Jesus rebukes Peter individually, but he does so while looking at the larger group of disciples (8:33).¹²⁰ It seems that the individual focus on Peter in these episodes is a result of Mark's close association of Peter with the mystery of Jesus' messianic identity and mode. *As an individual*, Peter voices an important advance in perception with regard to Jesus' messianic identity (8:29), and he voices important limitations of cognitive humanity with regard to Jesus' messianic mode (8:32-33; 9:5-6).¹²¹ In this way, he *individually embodies the standard behavior of an apocalyptic seer* while encountering the mysteries and beings of the divine realm. Whereas the disciples collectively embody the characteristics of apocalyptic seers elsewhere in the narrative,¹²² in 8:27-9:13, Mark portrays Peter more individually in the role of an apocalyptic seer, though not apart from the groups of disciples to which he belongs.¹²³

Perhaps the closest analogy to this tension between individual focus on Peter and general focus on larger groups in 8:27-9:13 is found in the court tales of Dan 1-6. Daniel is clearly prominent among the group of four, though their roles are bound up with his. This is especially apparent when Daniel individually asks the king for time to receive a revelation of the mystery (Dan 2:16), and then he asks his three friends to pray for mercy concerning the mystery (vv. 17-18). Daniel alone receives the

119. "The insight may be Peter's own, which, once he has spoken it, Jesus implicitly approves and therefore assumes the other disciples will now share" (Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 167).

120. Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 164-65, suggests that Mark's "clumsy" introduction of the other disciples in the episode "serves to draw some of the sting from the rebuke."

121. Cf. Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 169.

122. Cf. 4:10-34; 6:51-52; 7:1-23; 8:14-21; 9:14-29, 30-32; 10:1-12, 32-34; 13:1-37.

123. Regarding the individuality of Peter in these episodes, see Wiarda, "Peter as Peter," 28-30.

revelation of the mystery (vv. 19), and Daniel, seemingly alone, approaches the king in order to deliver the interpretation. However, in v. 36, Daniel's first-person singular speech lapses into the first-person plural, indicating that all four participated in delivering the interpretation to the king, with Daniel functioning as their spokesman: "This was the dream; now we will tell [נאמר; ἐρροῦμεν (Th)] the king its interpretation." The differences are considerable between the court tales of Dan 1-6 and Mark's Gospel, but Dan 2 is perhaps the only place in the extant literature that shows a precedent for a group functioning collectively as an apocalyptic seer,¹²⁴ with an individual member of that group standing out prominently at points.

7. Even in the remote possibility that Dan 2 clarifies Peter's prominence among the group of disciples in Mark 8:27-9:13, we should still conclude that, for the most part, Mark's portrayal of groups of disciples as apocalyptic seers reflects his innovation beyond the constraints of the apocalypse genre. This innovation of the normally individualized portrayal of apocalyptic seers might be the result of Mark's fidelity to historical memory and tradition, which held the individual disciples together as a group in their interaction with Jesus. Moreover, given the pervasive influence of the apocalypse genre on Mark's portrayal of the disciples, it is remarkable that he did not write an apocalypse,¹²⁵ but wrote (invented?) a gospel. Despite Mark's desire to

124. Daniel 2 is of course part of the non-apocalypse portion of the book of Daniel. But, as discussed in ch. 2 of this study, Dan 1-6 likely functioned as an extended narrative framework for the apocalypse, and so furnishes potential evidence for the literary portrayal of Daniel as an apocalyptic seer. Yet, even though this is the case, Daniel's activity of interpreting the king's vision is much more similar to the role of an angelic mediator of revelation in the apocalypses rather than the role of an apocalyptic seer. Therefore, it is questionable whether Daniel and his friends actually function collectively as apocalyptic seers in the interpretation of the king's vision, which lends support to the point that Mark's portrayal of Peter and the disciples reflects his innovation beyond the constraints of the apocalypse genre.

125. Perrin repeatedly refers to Mark's Gospel as essentially an apocalypse (Norman Perrin, "Historical Criticism, Literary Criticism, and Hermeneutics: The Interpretation of the Parables of Jesus and the Gospel of Mark Today," *JR* 52 [1972]: 365-66, 368, 372). By this he seems to mean that Mark's Gospel was intended to function in the same manner as an apocalypse. Although the results of this chapter confirm that Perrin is correct in discerning the affinities between Mark's Gospel and the apocalypse genre, it is important that Mark's considerable innovation is not

portray Peter and the disciples as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, he placed their reception of this revelation within the events of Jesus' ministry, holding historical events and divine mysteries closely together in his Gospel. Additionally, he did not portray Peter and the disciples merely as apocalyptic seers, but as Jesus' historical disciples, and so as those who were commissioned as the extensions of his earthly ministry. For this reason, it is important to recognize that not every aspect of their portrayal can be explained by comparison with the apocalypses. In merging together the historical events of Jesus' ministry with the divine mysteries revealed through it, Mark produced Matthew's most important source and determined the general trajectory for the portrayal of Peter in Matthew's Gospel, to which we now turn.

CHAPTER 6

PETER AND THE DISCIPLES AS APOCALYPTIC SEERS IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we established that the portrayal of Peter in the Gospel of Mark—both as an individual and as a member of disciple-groups—exhibits a substantial degree of continuity with the portrayals of apocalyptic seers in the apocalypse genre. In the present chapter, we shall observe that the same is true with regard to Matthew's Gospel. This is not at all surprising since Mark's Gospel provided the general parameters for Matthew's portrayal of these characters. However, as we shall see, Matthean redaction of Markan source material, and his incorporation of non-Markan source and tradition, displays unique emphases as well as innovation, at points.

As with Mark's Gospel, the portrayal of Peter has been shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers in conjunction with two of the Gospel's major themes: 1) Jesus' enigmatic proclamation, and 2) Jesus' messianic identity and mode. In the previous chapter, each of these themes was handled separately, mainly for the sake of convenience and simplicity. Thus, we began our discussion with Mark 4:1-34, and then handled all of the passages related to Jesus' enigmatic proclamation before moving on to the second section, which dealt with Jesus' messianic identity and mode. However, due to Matthew's placement of Mark 4:1-34 at comparatively later point in his Gospel (13:1-52), and on account of his more blended presentation of the two themes, our procedure in the present chapter will not correspond exactly to that of the preceding one. Indeed, Matthew closely ties both themes together in 11:25-27,

which stands as the narrative entrance into a study of either theme on its own.¹ This is our appropriate starting point.

Revelation of “These Things”

Matthew 11:25-27, which comes from Q (Luke 10:21-22),² is a prayer of thanksgiving spoken by Jesus to the Father,³ which functions in Matthew’s narrative as an exclusionary statement similar to those found in the apocalypses. This exclusionary statement establishes two points that are integral to what follows in the narrative. The first point is that there are two groups within Israel, who are distinguished primarily by whether or not they have received revelation from the Father: “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. For you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding [ὅτι ἔκρυψας ταῦτα ἀπὸ σοφῶν καὶ συνετῶν], but have revealed them to little children [καὶ ἀπεκάλυψας αὐτὰ νηπίοις]” (11:25). The second point is that Jesus stands in unique relationship to the Father, is known only by the Father, and functions as one who reveals the Father to those whom he chooses: “All things have been entrusted to me by my Father [Πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς μου], and no one knows the Son except the Father [καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ], nor does anyone know the Father except the Son and whomever the Son chooses to reveal him to [οὐδὲ τὸν πατέρα τις ἐπιγινώσκει εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ ὃς ἐὰν βούληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψαι]” (11:27). The second point entails something similar to the first—that there is an exclusive group, chosen by the Son, who will receive revelation of the Father. Moreover, since only the Father knows the Son, the implication is that knowledge of the Son is not merely

1. W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, vol. 2 (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 296, refer to 11:25-30 as “a capsule summary of the message of the entire gospel.”

2. On Matthew’s redaction of this passage, see Frances Taylor Gench, *Wisdom in the Christology of Matthew* (Lanham/New York/Oxford: University Press of America, 1997), 104–5.

3. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 273. Cf. Dan 2:20-23; 2 Bar. 54:1-5 as possible analogies for a praise directed to God with reference to his act of revealing mysteries.

apprehended by human intellect or intuition. This exclusionary statement raises several important questions, the answers to which have implications for the remainder of our analysis.

Why has Jesus Spoken this Exclusionary Statement?

The exclusionary statement of 11:25-27 represents Jesus' assessment of two divergent responses to his Galilean ministry. His ministry has largely consisted of a summons to repentance in view of the nearness of the kingdom of heaven. Thus, he preached the same message as John, and he commissioned the Twelve to preach it as well: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is near [μετανοεῖτε· ἤγγικεν γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν]" (4:17).⁴ Yet, Matthew indicates that not all among Jesus' audiences responded with repentance and faith. This is especially clear in the portrayal of the Jewish leadership thus far in the narrative. The Pharisees and Sadducees—in contrast to the people who were confessing their sins and receiving John's baptism of repentance—are introduced by John's preaching as a "brood of vipers," γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν (3:5-10). This polemic is then picked up by Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, when he indicates that the scribes and Pharisees do not possess adequate righteousness for entrance into the kingdom of heaven (5:20). Additionally, Matthew's narrative comment at the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount draws the reader's attention to a fundamental contrast between Jesus, who spoke with authority, and the scribes of the people, who did not (7:29).⁵ All of this builds a portrayal of the Jewish leadership as those who did not yield to Jesus' prophetic preaching and teaching, remaining unrepentant all along. Their obduracy is not

4. Cf. 4:23; 9:13, 35; 11:5; 3:2 (John); 10:7 (the Twelve), where the injunction to repent is only implied in the message of the kingdom. Cf. also 6:9-13, where Jesus couples repentance with anticipation of the kingdom in a single prayer.

5. Note Matthew's redactional specification that these scribes are the people's scribes, οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν, whereas Mark merely refers to them as οἱ γραμματεῖς (Mark 1:22). Orton argues that this Matthean specification clarifies that his polemic is not against scribes in general, but against Pharasaic scribes (Orton, *Understanding Scribe*, 30–31). Matthew likely means divine authority by his use of ἐξουσία in 7:29 (cf. 9:8).

simply neutral indifference; Matthew highlights that they are antagonistic towards Jesus. The scribes accuse Jesus of blasphemy because he forgives sins (9:3-4), and the Pharisees are critical of his association with sinners (9:11). Matthew leaves no question about their outright opposition to Jesus when the Pharisees attribute his exorcistic power to the prince of demons (9:34).⁶

In view of the generally positive responses of the crowds to Jesus thus far in the narrative,⁷ it is somewhat surprising that Matthew highlights a seemingly significant portion of the general populace who, like the leadership, do not respond to Jesus' ministry with repentance and faith. When Jesus commissions the Twelve to travel in itinerant ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, he advises them to take along no provision, but to remain dependent upon the hospitality of those who live where they will minister. However, if the Twelve are not received nor listened to, that town can expect a worse eschatological fate than that of Sodom or Gomorrah (10:15).⁸ This adumbrates what becomes explicit in Jesus' prophetic denunciations of entire Galilean cities in 11:20-24—that the majority of those to whom Jesus (and the Twelve) directed his Galilean ministry did not respond with repentance (cf. 7:13-14). Matthew indicates that their unrepentance was precisely the reason for Jesus' pronouncement of eschatological woe upon these cities (11:20).⁹

This widespread unrepentance provides the rationale for Jesus' exclusionary statement in 11:25-27. The statement is Jesus' assessment of the fact that the majority of Israel, especially the leadership, had not repented. Moreover, it is Jesus' response to the fact that “this generation” had failed to recognize the significance of

6. Jesus' injunctions to watch out for false prophets, who are like ravenous wolves (λύκοι ἄρπαγες), probably has the scribes and Pharisees in view (7:15). These are likely also the wolves among whom the Twelve will minister (10:16), enduring persecution and incurring the same accusations that the Pharisees directed towards Jesus (10:17-31).

7. Cf. 4:23-25; 7:28-29; 9:8, 33.

8. Cf. the similar statements in 11:22, 24; *Gk. Apoc. Ezra* 7:12.

9. The absence of Matthew's statement, ὅτι οὐ μετενόησαν, from the parallel in Luke 10:12-15 may suggest that this is a Matthean emphasis.

John and Jesus (11:16-19; cf. 17:10-13),¹⁰ and so what God was doing in and through them.¹¹ This sheds some light on the imprecise language of the exclusionary statement itself, which is taken up in the following.

To Whom Does Jesus' Exclusionary Statement Refer?

Since the unrepentance of Israel provides the rationale for Jesus' exclusionary statement in 11:25-27, it is quite obvious that the unrepentant in general are included among those who have not received revelation of "these things"—the Father has hidden "these things" from them. However, Matthew's specific designation of this group as the "wise [σοφοί] and understanding [συνετοί]" suggests that the scribes and Pharisees (and perhaps Sadducees) are especially in view here.¹² It is true that σοφός and συνετός can simply refer to the education, sophistication, or status of an

10. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 235; Celia M. Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah, and Discipleship in Matthew 11.25–30* (JSNTSup 18; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 30.

11. The context of 11:16-19 is an extended discourse about the role of John and Jesus in God's work. First, John's disciples question whether Jesus is indeed the one who is coming, ὁ ἐρχόμενος (11:3). Jesus responds by reciting his works that point to his identity as this figure (11:4-6). Next, Jesus takes up the matter of John's identity as a prophet, and more specifically as the Elijah who was to come, αὐτός ἐστιν Ἡλίας ὁ μέλλων ἔρχεσθαι (11:14). Then, in a statement that is vaguely similar to Ezek 33:32 (cf. Ezek 2:5), Jesus underscores that "this generation" is not only unresponsive to God's prophets (11:16-17), but that the people's leaders do not even recognize them as such (11:18-19; concerning the difficulties associated with interpreting this saying, see Wendy J. Cotter, "The Parable of the Children in the Market-Place, Q [Lk] 7:31–35: An Examination of the Parable's Image and Significance," *NovT* 29 [1987]: esp. 294–95). Jesus' criticism of "this generation" seems to be directed especially at the leadership, since elsewhere there are indications that the general populace did accept that both John and Jesus were prophets (cf. 14:5; 21:26, 46). However, the people generally fail to perceive that John is "more than a prophet" (11:9), nor do they perceive that he is Ἡλίας ὁ μέλλων ἔρχεσθαι. The leadership accuses him of demon possession, and Jesus, as ὁ ἐρχόμενος is accused of being a drunkard, glutton, and cohort of sinners (11:18-19). Cousland argues that the crowds are distinct from the leadership, though in the Passion Narrative the crowds ultimately become complicit in Jesus' death (J. R. C. Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew* [NovTSup 102; Leiden: Brill, 2002], esp. 227–39). See also Paul Foster, "Prophets and Prophetism in Matthew," in *Prophets and Prophecy in Jewish and Early Christian Literature* (ed. Joseph Verheyden, Korinna Zamfir, and Tobias Nicklas; WUNT 2.286; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 122–26.

12. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 275; Gench, *Wisdom*, 110–11; more tentatively Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13* (WBC 33a; Dallas: Word Books, 1993), 318. Cf. 23:36-39, where a prophetic denunciation of "this generation" and "Jerusalem" has been generalized from specific indictments of the scribes and Pharisees (23:1-35). Cf. Celia M. Deutsch, *Lady Wisdom, Jesus, and the Sages: Metaphor and Social Context in Matthew's Gospel* (Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity, 1996), 60.

individual or group.¹³ However, on account of the revelatory focus of this passage,¹⁴ Matthew probably intends something much more specific with these terms. In the apocalypses, these terms sometimes describe those who have revelatory insight into the mysteries of God (e.g., Dan 1:4 [G]; 2:21; *Herm.* 79:6). Indeed, as we have noted in Part 1, the apocalyptic seer's understanding is often a point of emphasis, especially as he receives explanations of the mysteries that are revealed to him.¹⁵ More to the point, the apocalypses use these (and similar) terms as semi-technical designations for those who are able to recognize the work of God in the last days on account of their knowledge of the law and their access to esoteric revelation (usually a deposit of written revelation), and so function as teachers in the last days, normally in the context of Gentile hegemony or persecution (cf. Dan 11:33, 35; 12:3, 10; *1 En.* 82:2-3; 100:6; 104:12-105:1; *4 Ezra* 12:38; 14:13, 26, 45-48; *2 Bar.* 27:15-28:1).¹⁶ Jesus' statement in 11:25 probably employs these terms in this semi-technical sense to reflect what the scribes and Pharisees presumed about themselves—that they were the σοφοί and συνετοί who were in a position to discern the work of God in the last days.¹⁷ That they had not discerned the significance of John and Jesus (cf. 11:16-19), and thus the signs of the approaching kingdom (cf. 16:3-4), meant that their

13. Cf. Rom 1:14; 1 Cor 1:26; Acts 13:7.

14. Cf. the 'revelatory' verbs κρύπτω and ἀποκαλύπτω (twice each).

15. Cf. Dan 8:17; 9:23, 25; 10:1, 14; *1 En.* 1:2; 81:1-2; 93:2; *4 Ezra* 4:22-23; *2 Bar.* 43:1; *2 En.* 33:3; *Apoc. Ab.* 23:3; 30:1; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 8:11-12; 10:18; 11:1, 22; *Herm.* 16:10-11; 18:9-10; 40:5-6; 56:1-2; 57:2-5; 58:1; 79:6-7; 82:5; 91:4; *Lad. Jac.* 3:2.

16. 4Q300Myst^b Frags. 1a-b Col. 2, 1-2 illustrates well the status of those who are "wise in understanding" as those with insight into mysteries, and also the polemic with which this status is upheld: "[Consider the sooth]sayers, those teachers of sin. Say the parable, declare the riddle before we speak; then you will know if you have truly understood. [...] your foolishness, for the seal of the vision is sealed up from you, and you have not properly understood the eternal mysteries and you have not become wise in understanding" (trans. Wise, Abegg, and Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation*, 111). Cf. *1 En.* 92:1; 93:10; 105:1; 107:1; *2 En.* 48:6-9; *2 Bar.* 44:14-15; 45:1-2; *Jas* 3:13-18; 1 Cor 3:18.

17. Thus, it is all the more clear why they ask Jesus to show them a sign (12:38; 16:1). Their requests were probably not solely for a sign to confirm that Jesus was a prophet (cf. Deut 13:1-2), but these were likely requests to see one of the signs by which those who lived at the cusp of eschatological fulfillment would be able to recognize the arrival of the last days (cf. *4 Ezra* 5:1-13; 6:20-24; 8:63-9:6; *Sib. Or.* 3:796-808; *2 Bar.* 25:1-4; Mark 13:4-31 and pars.).

presumed status as the “wise and understanding” was actually incorrect.¹⁸ In a surprising eschatological reversal, God had hidden “these things” from them, but revealed them to νηπίοις (cf. 21:31-32).¹⁹ Therefore, Jesus’ reference to their presumed status picks up the Matthean polemic that is evident at earlier points in the narrative (3:7-12; 5:20; 7:28-29).²⁰

In contrast with these “wise and understanding,” there are others, designated with the term νήπιοι, to whom God has indeed revealed “these things.” In keeping with the rationale for Jesus’ exclusionary statement, we may assume that all who had responded to Jesus’ message with repentance and faith are envisaged among this group of νήπιοι, or “children.”²¹ The term likely reflects the leadership’s view of the people as those who were deficiently instructed in the law, or insufficiently obedient to it.²² Such a term would be appropriately antithetical to the designations σοφοί and συνετοί, since it is used in Pss 18:9[19:7 MT] and 118[119 MT]:130 to describe those who lack wisdom, whose condition is remedied by the law. Additionally, the term probably reflects the leadership’s estimation that the people did not possess the requisite wisdom or understanding to discern the work of God in the last days, or to distinguish it from the work of Beelzeboul (cf. 9:33-34; 12:23-24). Indeed, based on the accusations of 9:34 and 11:18-19, it is reasonable to infer that the leadership

18. Cf. Deutsch, *Lady Wisdom, Jesus, and the Sages*, 60.

19. Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 274; Lena Lybæk, *New and Old in Matthew 11–13: Normativity in the Development of Three Theological Themes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 199–200.

20. If the allusion to Isa 29:14 that is noted in the margin of NA²⁷ is correct, our contention that the “wise and understanding” refers especially to the scribes and Pharisees may find further support in the preceding context of Isa 29:10-12, which refers to Yahweh’s work of obstructing the revelatory capabilities of Jerusalem’s prophets and seers (v. 10), causing them to be excluded from having insight into the significance of Isaiah’s revelations (vv. 10-11) (cf. Lybæk, *New and Old*, 200–207). The likelihood that this passage stands behind Matt 11:25-27 is perhaps increased by Matthew’s citation of Isa 29:13 with reference to the scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem in 15:7-8.

21. This figurative sense of ‘children’ is also found in 1 Cor 3:1; Rom 2:20; Eph 4:14; Heb 5:13.

22. Cf. Rom 2:20.

viewed those who followed John and Jesus as being deceived by demons (cf. 10:24-25)—mere children without any eschatological discernment.²³

At this point in the narrative, there is no evidence to suggest that the term *νήπιοι* refers only to the Twelve; however, there are reasons to conclude that this term refers especially to them.²⁴ When Jesus selects and commissions the Twelve (10:1-42), he alludes to the fact that the Spirit of the Father will speak through them (10:19-20), which seems to presuppose what is envisaged in 11:25—that the Father has revealed the significance of Jesus and his message to them, especially since they declare that same message. Moreover, 10:27 seems to organize Jesus' private instruction to them in a revelatory scheme: "What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light, and what you hear in your ear, preach on the rooftops." Thus, the narrative that precedes 11:25-27 already indicates that the Twelve receive revelation from the Father and from Jesus. Furthermore, as the narrative progresses, the Twelve are shown to constitute the antithesis to the scribes and Pharisees.²⁵ Thus, it seems increasingly likely, in narrative retrospect, that *νήπιοι* may be the leadership's disparaging designation for the Twelve especially, though not exclusively. If this term refers to the Twelve especially—and if it is indeed a derogatory term coined by the scribes and Pharisees with reference to the Twelve and their legacy among the Matthean community—then Matthew's reasons for emphasizing the appropriateness of child-likeness and insignificance might come more clearly into view.²⁶

23. This would also find support in the Pharisees' reference to Jesus as *ἐκεῖνος ὁ πλάνοϋς*, 'that deceiver', and in their concern that his resurrection would cause a greater deception than his ministry had (27:63-64; cf. *T. Levi* 16:1-5).

24. Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 137; Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke*, 31–32; Rainer Riesner, *Jesus als Lehrer* (WUNT 2.7; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1981), 478; Gench, *Wisdom*, 106–8, 111. Contra Lybæk, *New and Old*, 204; David B. Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story: A Study in the Narrative Rhetoric of the First Gospel* (JSNTSup 42; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 232–33; F. W. Beare, "The Mission of the Disciples and the Mission Charge: Matthew 10 and Parallels," *JBL* 89 (1970): 3, who argues that the disciples are not present in the setting.

25. Cf. Sjef Van Tilborg, *The Jewish Leaders in Matthew* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 99–113.

26. Cf. 10:42; 18:1-14; 19:13-15; 20:26-28; 21:15-16; 23:5-12.

What is Revealed?

Jesus' exclusionary statement refers to what the Father has hidden from some but revealed to others merely as ταῦτα (11:25). In the preceding discourse, he has addressed the problem that "this generation" has not perceived the significance John as Ἡλίας ὁ μέλλων ἔρχεσθαι, nor have they perceived that Jesus is ὁ ἐρχόμενος. Instead, John has been accused of demon possession (as was Jesus [9:34]), and Jesus has been labeled a cohort of sinners (11:18-19). Even the crowds' conviction that they are prophets falls short.²⁷ Therefore, the narrative context would suggest that a true perception of John and Jesus' significance, and perhaps their identities as eschatological agents, would be included among the ταῦτα that the Father has revealed to νηπίοις (cf. 12:15-16). Since their significance was related to the nearness of the kingdom of heaven, it is likely that ταῦτα also entailed an awareness that the eschatological age was dawning in conjunction with their ministries.²⁸ Along with the claim in v. 27 that no one knows the Son except the Father,²⁹ v. 25 establishes that perception of Jesus' significance and identity, which is perhaps to be equated with knowledge of the Son, is only attained via revelation from the Father.³⁰

Just as the Father, according to his good pleasure, reveals the significance of Jesus (i.e., "these things") to some, so also does Jesus, as the Son, reveal the Father to some whom he chooses. Jesus says that "all things have been entrusted to me by

27. According to Matthew, the majority of the people, excluding the leadership, held that John and Jesus were prophets (cf. 14:5; 16:14; 21:11, 26, 46). Of course, this is shown to be an insufficient conclusion in both cases (cf. 11:9, 14; 16:16; 17:12-13).

28. Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 276–77. "The indefinite ταῦτα is thus best understood as a reference to the kingdom of God" (Luz, *Matthew 8–20*, 163). "The very unspecific term 'these things' must be understood in the context of the whole revelatory process of Jesus' ministry, both the truths he has taught and the truth about who he himself is" (R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* [NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 443).

29. *Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah* probably reflects a similar idea in its assertion that humans cannot know the names of the beings who reside in the seventh heaven, particularly the names of the Father and the Son (cf. 7:4-5a, 37; 8:7-8; 9:5; cf. Rev 19:12).

30. Deutsch claims that 11:25-27 presents Jesus as "personified Wisdom." She notes the apocalyptic nature of the revelation envisaged there, though she associates that revelation with wisdom (Deutsch, *Lady Wisdom, Jesus, and the Sages*, 56–57).

my Father [Πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός μου]” (11:27). Commentators have variously understood this as referring to the comprehensive authority that the Father had granted to Jesus,³¹ or the comprehensive knowledge that the Father has bestowed upon him.³² The revelatory focus of vv. 25-27 makes the latter option more likely,³³ but since the two options are not mutually exclusive, the former is probably also implied (cf. 28:18).³⁴ The immediately following statements about the exclusive mutual knowledge of the Son and Father seem to elaborate on the πάντα that have been entrusted to Jesus. In other words, Jesus’ exclusive knowledge of the Father is one specific aspect of the πάντα that have been entrusted to him. On the basis of his exclusive knowledge of the Father, Jesus, as the Son, reveals the Father to those whom he exclusively chooses.³⁵

Since Jesus’ ability to reveal the Father is based on the fact that πάντα have been entrusted to him, v. 27 also hints towards what will become evident at later points in the Gospel—that Jesus reveals other mysteries to some. In revelatory contexts such as 11:25-27, πάντα sometimes functions as shorthand for the future events of history, and often carries a distinctively eschatological connotation. Moreover, in these places it serves the rhetorical function of reiterating the comprehensive nature of what has been disclosed. For example, when Levi completes a review of history up to the eschaton, he says, “And now, my children, you have heard everything [πάντα ἠκούσατε]” (*T. Levi* 19:1). Similarly, towards the conclusion of his testament, Simeon says, “I have foretold everything to you [προεῖρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα]” (*T. Sim.* 6:1; cf. Mark 13:23). Again, Naphtali says,

31. So Gench, *Wisdom*, 112.

32. Jesus’ comprehensive knowledge is probably the presupposition for his ability to discern the thoughts of other characters (e.g., 9:4; 12:25). His comprehensive knowledge is probably rooted in the affirmation that God knows all things, which is regularly affirmed in the literature (e.g., *1 En.* 9:5, 11; *2 Bar.* 54:1-3; *Apoc. Sedr.* 8:6-10; *Sib. Or.* 8:375-77).

33. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, 320.

34. E.g., the comprehensive knowledge and authority of the Son are closely related in *Sib. Or.* 8:282-85.

35. Cf. *1 En.* 48:7.

“Behold, my children, I have shown you the last times, all things that will happen in Israel [ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν καιροὺς ἐσχάτους, ὅτι πάντα γενήσεται ἐν Ἰσραήλ]” (*T. Naph.* 8:1; cf. *Apoc. Ab.* 24:2). Before Abraham’s journey to the gates through which the wicked and righteous pass to their final abodes, God tells the angel Michael to show Abraham πάντα (*T. Ab.* 8:2 [B]). Likewise, on account of his cosmic journeys, Enoch hears everything from the angels (ἤκουσα παρ’ αὐτῶν πάντα [*I En.* 1:2]).³⁶ Baruch requests that God reveal all things to him (δεῖξόν μοι πάντα διὰ τὸν κύριον [*3 Bar.* 4:1 {G}]), and the Sibyl claims that her books reveal all things concerning the course of history (*Sib. Or.* 11:318-20). Therefore, although πάντα is imprecise, on account of the revelatory context of 11:27, it probably alludes to Jesus’ comprehensive knowledge of divine mysteries, with specific reference to his knowledge concerning the establishment of the kingdom of heaven and the outworking of eschatological events—in other words, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.³⁷

Conclusion

In Matthew’s narrative, 11:25-27 represents Jesus’ response to the fact that much of Israel had rejected his call to repentance, and had failed to discern the significance of both John and Jesus in God’s kingdom work. Thus, by way of an exclusionary statement, Jesus provides an explanation of why this is the case—some have received revelation, while others have been blinded. The language used to describe these groups reflects the leadership’s estimations of each group, and so engages in a polemic against their point of view. The Father had withheld revelation of “these things” from those who viewed themselves as the “wise and

36. Knowledge of all things, delivered by the angels, is also attributed to Methuselah in *Ps.-Eup.* 9.17.9 (τοῦ δὲ Ἐνὸχ γενέσθαι υἱὸν Μαθουσάλαν, ὃν πάντα δι’ ἀγγέλων θεοῦ γινῶναι καὶ ἡμᾶς οὕτως ἐπιγινῶναι).

37. In 5:18 and 17:11, πάντα also seems to carry eschatological connotations (cf. also Mark 4:11). Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 279–80, note the comprehensiveness and eschatological thrust of πάντα. Cf. also Orton, *Understanding Scribe*, 146–47, and the comments of Robert Charles Branden, *Satanic Conflict and the Plot of Matthew* (Studies in Biblical Literature 89; New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 88–89, regarding the phrase, ταῦτα πάντα, in Matt 13:51.

understanding,” who presumed to discern God’s eschatological kingdom work. Yet, those whom they disparagingly viewed as “children” had received revelation of “these things” according to the Father’s good pleasure. This conforms to the pattern of eschatological reversal that pervades the Gospel. Jesus’ exclusionary statement also asserts his function as one who reveals the Father, on the basis of his exclusive knowledge of him. Such knowledge is one aspect of the πάντα that have been entrusted to Jesus.

With this exclusionary statement, which Matthew has appropriated from Q, the narrative has delimited a group within Israel who are the exclusive recipients of revelation from the Father. What is revealed to them is closely associated with Jesus’ messianic identity and his significance in relation to the nearness of the kingdom of heaven (cf. 11:2-6). Moreover, the exclusionary statement looks forward, hinting at Jesus’ disclosure of other matters among the πάντα that have been entrusted to him. In the next section, we shall see that Jesus’ enigmatic proclamation indeed discloses many mysteries of the kingdom. Although there is no explicit focus on the Twelve nor any focus on Peter in 11:25-27, this exclusionary statement identifies the larger group from which they emerge, and establishes that they, as recipients of revelation, stand in contrast to the leadership—a contrast that will become more pronounced as the narrative unfolds.

Jesus’ Enigmatic Proclamation

In the previous chapter, we noted that Mark 4:1-34 establishes that Jesus’ enigmatic proclamation consists of veiled presentations of the mystery of the kingdom of God. We observed that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers as the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries shaped Mark’s portrayal of the disciples. Specifically, Mark used exclusionary statements and narrative isolation to portray the disciples as the exclusive recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God, which

was disclosed to them through Jesus' private explanations. Additionally, the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers as humans encountering the mysteries of the divine realm has also shaped Mark's portrayal of the disciples in 4:1-34, since their cognitive humanity prevents them from understanding Jesus' enigmatic proclamation apart from his explanations. The basic paradigm that Mark establishes in 4:1-34 is then recapitulated at several other points in his Gospel (i.e., 7:1-23; 9:14-29, 33-50; 10:1-12; 13:1-37).

In this section, we shall see that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has also influenced Matthew's portrayal of the disciples in the Matthean parallel to Mark 4:1-34. On the one hand, the influence is indirect, coming to bear through Matthew's appropriation of Markan and Q source material. On the other hand, the influence appears to be direct at points, since Matthew does not merely reproduce his source material, but he adjusts it in places, escalating some elements, but muting others. Moreover, Matthew's special material in this section exhibits features associated with the portrayals of apocalyptic seers, perhaps representing a line of direct influence. The Matthean parallel to Mark 4:1-34 likewise serves a paradigmatic function for other episodes, which warrants a consideration of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation elsewhere in the Gospel.

Mark's Revelatory Paradigm in Matthew 13:1-52

As discussed above, Matthew has identified a group within Israel, the "children," who stand in distinction from the "wise and understanding" as those who have received revelation from the Father (cf. 11:25). We have suggested that the term "children" may refer especially to the Twelve, and this becomes even more plausible in light of 13:1-52. Here, Matthew develops the portrayal of the disciples as those who receive revelation in contradistinction to others who do not.³⁸ However, in 13:1-

38. Wilkins observes the close connection between μαθητής and οἱ δώδεκα in Matthew's Gospel (Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 171; Jeannine K. Brown, *Disciples*, 39–41). This is evident in

52, it is not “these things” that are revealed, nor is it the Father who functions as the revealer; rather, Jesus reveals the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, which are veiled in his enigmatic proclamation and represent other aspects of the πάντα that have been entrusted to him (cf. 11:25). As was the case in Mark 4:1-34, Matthew’s portrayal of the disciples in 13:1-52 has been influenced considerably by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers. Matthew uses the features of exclusionary statements and narrative isolation to portray the disciples as the exclusive recipients of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Moreover, the disciples, like apocalyptic seers, exhibit their cognitive humanity when confronted with the mysteries of the divine realm. Nevertheless, each of these features appears somewhat differently in Matt 13:1-52 than in Mark 4:1-34.

Exclusive Recipients of the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Matthew 13:1-52 includes an extended exclusionary statement (13:11-17), which forcefully emphasizes that Jesus’ disciples are the exclusive recipients of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, in contradistinction to all others. As in Mark 4:1-34, the exclusionary statement follows Jesus’ public presentation of the Parable of the Sower. When his disciples ask him why he speaks to the crowds in parables (13:10), he says to them, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven [ὅτι ὑμῖν δέδοται γνῶναι τὰ μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν], but to those it has not been granted [ἐκείνοις δὲ οὐ δέδοται]” (13:11).³⁹ This first part of Matthew’s extended exclusionary statement stands as the parallel to Mark 4:11. However, it contains several redactional alterations that are perhaps significant for our discussion.

a few places where the term is equated with the Twelve (e.g., 19:25; 26:18-20; possibly also 14:15-20).

39. Since Sir 38:24, 33-39:3 indicates that scribes were concerned with the interpretation of parables, Matt 13:11 and the following parables and explanations may pick up the polemic of 11:25 against the scribes and Pharisees.

First, Mark's singular mystery of the kingdom of God (τὸ μυστήριον...τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ) now reads as a plurality of mysteries of the kingdom of heaven (τὰ μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν).⁴⁰ This clarifies what was already evident in Mark's Gospel—that the mystery of the kingdom of God indeed comprises many mysteries associated with the kingdom. Second, Matthew's wording is more specific than Mark's, indicating that the disciples have been granted *knowledge* of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven (ὕμιν δέδοται γινῶναι τὰ μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν), whereas Mark says only that the *mystery* has been granted to them. We should avoid reading too much significance into Matthew's wording here, but it is possible that Matthew's inclusion of γινῶναι communicates more explicitly than Mark's wording that the disciples have been granted *insight* into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, rather than mere exposure to, or possession of, them.⁴¹ Such specificity would reinforce the point that, although the mysteries were broadcast widely in veiled form through Jesus' enigmatic proclamation,⁴² the knowledge of their significance was exclusively granted to the disciples. Third, Matthew's reference to the crowds as ἐκείνοις (Matt 13:11) has been stripped of the spatial

40. On the significance of Matthew's "kingdom of heaven," see Jonathan T. Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), esp. 279–330. Pennington says, "Matthew, drinking deeply at the waters of Daniel, has developed his kingdom of heaven language and theme from the same motif and similar language in Daniel 2–7" (Ibid., 289).

41. When the lexemes μυστήριον and γινώσκω appear in collocation in *1 Enoch*, they draw attention to the seer's insight into the mysteries of the divine realm, and not simply his exposure to them (e.g., *1 En.* 16:3; 103:2; 104:12; cf. also *Wis* 2:22; *Diogn.* 11:2). Perhaps Matthew's inclusion of γινῶναι reflects his redactional emphasis on the disciples' divinely granted perceptiveness or understanding, as will be discussed further in the following. However, as Luz observes, the inclusion of γινῶναι might be based on Mark's use of the verb in 4:13 (Luz, *Matthew* 8–20, 237 fn. 10). Moreover, since the parallel passage of Luke 8:10 also includes this phrase, ὕμιν δέδοται γινῶναι τὰ μυστήρια..., we must entertain the possibility that it represents their common expression of a phrase found in Q, and so represents very little of Matthew's own redactional interest.

42. This is the point that Matthew makes with his quotation of Ps 78:2[77:2 LXX] in Matt 13:35 with reference to the parables that Jesus spoke to the crowds. Hidden things (κεκρυμμένα), a near synonym for mysteries (cf. 2 Macc 12:41), are indeed communicated in veiled form through the parables. Though as the preceding context indicates, only the disciples have been granted knowledge of these mysteries, which is delivered via Jesus' explanations of his enigmatic proclamation.

element that was apparent in Mark's reference to the crowds as ἐκεῖνοις... τοῖς ἔξω (Mark 4:11).⁴³ The significance of this alteration will be discussed below.

In addition to these redactional adjustments, Matthew has also made substantive adjustments, which extend the exclusionary statement itself and provide an exposition of 13:11, further developing what was asserted there.⁴⁴ First, Matthew has placed Mark 4:25 immediately after his reproduction of 4:11 (i.e., 13:11). Thus, in 13:12, Jesus seems to teach that whoever has been granted knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven will receive more—an abundance more (ὅστις γὰρ ἔχει, δοθήσεται αὐτῷ καὶ περισσευθήσεται); but whoever has not been granted knowledge of these mysteries will lose even what insight is already possessed (ὅστις δὲ οὐκ ἔχει, καὶ ὃ ἔχει ἁρθήσεται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ).⁴⁵ In the context of Matthew's narrative, the latter part of this logion may pick up the polemic against the leadership that was evident in 11:25. In the discussion of 11:25 above, we noted that Jesus' reference to those who had not received revelation as the "wise and understanding" likely reflects the self-estimation of the leadership, who viewed themselves as those who possess the requisite insight to discern the work of God in the last days and to distinguish it from the work of Beelzeboul. It may also follow that they presumed to possess insight into the eschatological mysteries that were associated with the last days, based on their interpretation of Scripture and possibly other esoteric texts. If this is correct, then Matthew's combination of Mark 4:25 (Matt 13:12) with Mark 4:11 (Matt 13:11) creates a twofold polemic against the "wise and understanding"—13:11 *withholds* knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven from all but the disciples, and

43. Despite Matthew's differences from Mark here, Cerfaux, "La Connaissance Des Secrets Du Royaume d'Après Matt. XIII. 11 et Parallèles," 248, interprets both Mark and Matthew as referring to the Jewish leadership: "Le logion, à ce niveau, a subi probablement une légère retouche, que nous retrouvons dans Matthieu et qui sera amplifiée dans Marc: le pronom personnel ἐκεῖνοις désigne nommément les Juifs et les Pharisiens qui se rendent indignes de l'intelligence des secrets."

44. Luz, *Matthew* 8–20, 236.

45. This interpretation is based on taking the phrase τὰ μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν from v. 11a to be the implied subject of the verbs δοθήσεται and περισσευθήσεται in v. 12a (with the complementary infinitive γινῶναι probably implied as well).

v. 12 then also *removes* from the leadership their presumed insight into the eschatological mysteries of the last days. In other words, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, entrusted exclusively to the disciples, are the latest edition of eschatological mysteries, apart from which all other insight into such mysteries becomes outmoded and incomplete. This corresponds with the way that the apocalypses often attribute to their seers updated editions of eschatological mysteries, which provide the authoritative hermeneutical key to previous disclosures of such mysteries.⁴⁶

Second, Matthew elaborates on Mark's allusion to Isa 6:9, thereby developing the contrast between the disciples and all others that was asserted in the exclusionary statement of 13:11. He provides a compressed parallel to what is found in Mark 4:12,⁴⁷ but then he also produces a full quotation of Isa 6:9-10 LXX. Matthew's unique inclusion of Isa 6:10 along with his quotation of 6:9 sets up a part-for-part contrast between unrepentant Israel and the disciples. In fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, the unrepentant have dull hearts, ears that do not hear, and eyes that do not see: ἐπαχύνθη γὰρ ἡ καρδία τοῦ λαοῦ τούτου, καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν βαρέως ἤκουσαν καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν ἐκάμυσαν (13:15). Matthew then places a logion from Q directly following the Isa 6:9-10 quotation, which makes the exact opposite point about the disciples while using similar language: ὑμῶν δὲ μακάριοι οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ὅτι βλέπουσιν καὶ τὰ ὦτα ὑμῶν ὅτι ἀκούουσιν (13:16). Thus, Matthew explicitly

46. E.g., the mysteries revealed to Daniel in Dan 9 constitute a new edition of Jeremiah's seventy-year prophecy, and the mysteries revealed to Ezra in 4 *Ezra* 12 constitute a new edition of Daniel's fourth kingdom. This seems to be the way that Matt 24:15 stands in relation to Dan 11:31; 12:11.

47. In 13:13, Matthew's inclusion of the phrase, διὰ τοῦτο ἐν παραβολαῖς αὐτοῖς λαλῶ, specifies that this is Jesus' answer to the disciples' question in 13:10 (διὰ τί ἐν παραβολαῖς λαλεῖς αὐτοῖς;), and that what follows states his reason for speaking in parables. Matthew's inclusion of this phrase clarifies that the parables represent a change in Jesus' proclamation *caused by* Israel's unrepentance. This is also the point of Matthew's inclusion of Isa 6:10, which speaks of the dull hearts that lie behind imperception and unresponsiveness. Although Jesus (and John and the Twelve) had formerly proclaimed the necessity of repentance in view of the nearness of the kingdom, now he spoke enigmatically, assuming a familiar prophetic rhetorical posture triggered by, and in the face of, Israel's unrepentance (cf. Ezek 21:5 LXX [20:49 MT]; 24:3).

distinguishes the disciples from those whose eyes do not see and whose ears do not hear,⁴⁸ which corresponds to his omission of Mark 8:17-18 from the parallel passage in Matt 16:5-12.⁴⁹ As was asserted by the exclusionary statement of 11:25-27, the disciples are those who, in contrast with the vast majority of Israel, had perceived the work of God in Jesus and had responded with repentance. Thus, they are those who stand outside of Israel's tradition of unresponsiveness in the face of God's acts and prophetic word.⁵⁰

Third, although Matthew's placement of the Q logion just after his quotation of Isa 6:9-10 contrasts the disciples' sight and hearing with that of unrepentant Israel, it also has the rhetorical aim of emphasizing their unique status as recipients of revealed mysteries, thereby elaborating what Jesus said to them in 13:11.⁵¹ This was probably its primary rhetorical purpose in Q, where it likely stood apart from any reference to Isa 6:9-10, perhaps as an independent exclusionary statement.⁵² An emphasis on perceptive sight and hearing, as in Jesus' statement of blessing in 13:16, occasionally appears in revelatory contexts, such as prophetic oracles and apocalypses. In such contexts, the seer's perceptive sight and hearing are directly related to his status as a reliable recipient and conduit of revelation. For example, the introductions to Balaam's third and fourth oracles assert his prophetic credentials in terms of the perceptiveness of his sight and hearing: "The oracle of the man who

48. The *Animal Apocalypse* makes a similar distinction between the rebellious and righteous on the basis of sight. Throughout the historical review, those who rebel against God's prophetic word are dim-sighted and blind (*I En.* 89:32, 33, 41, 54, 74; [and deafened; 90:7], 26), but those who receive or respond to the prophetic word have open and seeing eyes (89:28, 40, 41, 44; 90:6, 9). Moreover, the salient characteristic of those who are gathered to comprise the eschatological community is that "[t]he eyes of all of them were opened, and they saw beautiful things; not a single one existed among them that could not see" (90:35).

49. "Do you not know or understand? Do you have hardened hearts? Having eyes, do you not see, and having ears, do you not hear?" (Mark 8:17-18).

50. Cf. Deut 29:2-4; Isa 6:9-10; 29:18; 32:3-4; 35:5; 42:18-20; 43:8; 48:8; Jer 5:21; Ezek 12:2.

51. Similarly, France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 515-16.

52. Cf. Luke 10:23-24, where it is coupled with the Q logion that appears in Matthew 11:25-27; James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann, and John S. Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q* (Minneapolis/Leuven: Fortress/Peeters, 2000), 196-99.

truly sees [φησὶν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἀληθινῶς ὀρῶν], the oracle of one who hears the words of God [φησὶν ἀκούων λόγια θεοῦ], who sees visions from God in sleep [ὅστις ὄρασιν θεοῦ εἶδεν ἐν ὕπνῳ], his eyes have been uncovered [ἀποκεκαλυμμένοι οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ] (Num 24:3-4, 15-16).⁵³ Similarly, the introduction to *I Enoch* emphasizes Enoch's sight and hearing with regard to his reception of revelation: "Enoch, a righteous man whose eyes were opened by God, who had the vision of the Holy One and of heaven, which he showed me. From the words of the watchers and the holy ones I heard everything; and as I heard everything from them, I also understood what I saw" (*I En.* 1:2).⁵⁴ Additionally, the angelic figure whom Ezekiel sees in his vision tells him, "With your eyes see [ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς σου ἰδὲ], and with your ears hear [καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὠσίν σου ἄκουε], and fix in your heart all things that I am showing to you [καὶ τάξον εἰς τὴν καρδίαν σου πάντα ὅσα ἐγὼ δεικνύω σοι], because I have come here for this reason, and you will show all things that you see to the house of Israel" (Ezek 40:4; cf. 44:5).⁵⁵ These texts demonstrate that mention of eyes and ears, sight and hearing, is part of the rhetoric associated with the portrayals of seers. Matthew, therefore, by way of his Q source material, not only provides a part-for-part contrast with unrepentant Israel, who fulfill Isa 6:9-10,⁵⁶ but he also builds the portrayal of the disciples as perceptive recipients of revelation, reiterating the claim of 13:11—that the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven have been granted to them.

The second part of this Q logion (i.e., Matt 13:17) confirms this point, since it directly compares the disciples' insight with that of other venerable figures, who also seem to have had access to revelation: ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πολλοὶ προφῆται καὶ

53. The introduction to the fourth oracle includes an additional statement that does not appear in the third oracle: "...who knows knowledge from Most High [ἐπιστάμενος ἐπιστήμην παρὰ ὑψίστου]" (Num 24:16).

54. Cf. Nickelsburg's comments regarding the similarities between *I En.* 1:2-3 and Num 22:15-17 (Nickelsburg, *I Enoch*, 137-39).

55. Cf. *4 Ezra* 10:55-56; *Apoc. Ab.* 32:1, 5-6.

56. Cf. Cousland, *Crowds*, 255.

δίκαιοι ἐπεθύμησαν ἰδεῖν ἃ βλέπετε καὶ οὐκ εἶδαν, καὶ ἀκοῦσαι ἃ ἀκούετε καὶ οὐκ ἤκουσαν (13:17). In his Gospel, Matthew uses the term προφήτης to designate two different, but closely related, groups.⁵⁷ In most places, προφήτης designates those who had written portions of Israel's Scripture, or whose prophetic ministries are recounted in Israel's Scriptures.⁵⁸ These prophets received the word of the LORD, which was revealed through the standard means of auditions, dreams, and visions (cf. Num 12:6), and usually disclosed the future to some extent (cf. Amos 3:7). Elsewhere, however, προφήτης designates those who are sent by Jesus as heralds of his message and as the continuation of his ministry (e.g., 10:41; 23:34). A main difference between the two groups is that the former precedes Jesus (and John),⁵⁹ being associated with authoritative tradition, and the latter follows in his legacy.⁶⁰ In 13:17, the aorist tense of the verbs describing the sight and hearing of the prophets, as contrasted with the present tense verbs associated with the sight and hearing of the disciples, indicates that Jesus is referring to the group of prophets that had preceded his ministry. Thus, these are the prophets who had previously received revelation about God's kingdom work, and who desired to see and hear what the disciples do, but did not.⁶¹ It is much less certain that the term δίκαιος denotes one who had access to revelation of any sort.⁶² There are, however, two other places in Matthew's narrative, aside from 13:17, where the terms δίκαιος and προφήτης appear in collocation, suggesting a degree of continuity between the two terms (cf. 10:41;

57. For a full discussion, see Foster, "Prophets and Prophetism in Matthew".

58. Cf. 1:22, 2:5, 15, 17, 23; 3:3; 4:14; 5:12; 8:17; 12:17, 39; 13:35; 16:14; 21:4; 23:29-31; 24:15; 26:56; 27:9.

59. The term is applied to both John (11:9; 14:5; 21:26) and Jesus (13:57; 21:11, 46), though Matthew clearly views the designation as only partially correct in both cases.

60. Common to both groups, however, is that they are the objects of persecution (cf. 5:12; 10:11-42; 23:29-36).

61. So France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 515-16.

62. Though note that the introduction to *I Enoch* refers to Enoch as ἄνθρωπος δίκαιός (*I En.* 1:2; cf. 15:1).

23:29).⁶³ At a minimum, the righteous of old were those who adhered to the prophetic message and hope, and so longed to see and hear what the disciples do, regardless of whether they received revelation as the prophets did. Nevertheless, the point of 13:17 elaborates that of 13:11—that the disciples had been granted knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, thereby surpassing in revelatory insight what had been disclosed even to the prophets and righteous of old.⁶⁴

With these three substantive adjustments, Matthew has strongly reinforced Jesus' exclusionary statement of 13:11, thereby displaying a somewhat innovative, and greatly elaborated, reproduction of the exclusionary statement that appeared in Mark 4:11. However, in contrast with this, Matthew mutes the second exclusionary statement in his Markan source material, which appeared in Mark 4:33-34. Whereas the statement in Mark reads, *Καὶ τοιαύταις παραβολαῖς πολλαῖς ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον καθὼς ἠδύναντο ἀκούειν· χωρὶς δὲ παραβολῆς οὐκ ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς, κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς ἰδίοις μαθηταῖς ἐπέλυεν πάντα* (4:33-34), Matthew reproduces it as, *ταῦτα πάντα ἐλάλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν παραβολαῖς τοῖς ὄχλοις καὶ χωρὶς παραβολῆς οὐδὲν ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς* (13:34). Matthew has excised the reference to Jesus' private explanation of all things to the disciples, thereby muting the explicit contrast between the crowds and the disciples with reference to Jesus' enigmatic proclamation in parables.

63. In 10:41, both terms are closely associated with the Twelve and those who would function as itinerant heralds of the gospel on Jesus' behalf. In 23:29, the prophets and righteous of old seem to paradigmatically correspond to the *προφῆτας καὶ σοφοὺς καὶ γραμματεῖς* whom Jesus will send to Jerusalem, and whose righteous blood (*αἷμα δίκαιον*)—which is counted among the blood of Abel and the prophet Zechariah (23:34-37)—is shed as a result of persecution carried out by the scribes and Pharisees. Therefore, from the perspective of Matthew and his community, it would seem that the prophets and righteous comprised a group of those who were *sent* by Jesus for the purpose of proclaiming the gospel and making disciples, carrying on the work of the Twelve, who were the first sent by Jesus.

64. Margaret Hannan, *The Nature and Demands of the Sovereign Rule of God in the Gospel of Matthew* (LNTS 308; London/New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 107. It is interesting to note that in *Tg. Ps.-J.* Num 24:3-4, 15-16, the statements about Balaam's perceptive sight and hearing have been replaced with statements about his unique insight into the mysteries that were concealed even from the prophets. The basis for this assertion is that Balaam foresaw the Messiah. Cf. also Eph 3:4-5.

Consequently, 13:34 does not function as an exclusionary statement in Matthew's narrative as 4:33-34 did in Mark's.

Matthew's muting of Mark 4:33-34 is related to his dampening of the spatial distinctions between the disciples and the crowds that were explicit throughout Mark 4:10-34. We have briefly noted above that one of Matthew's redactional adjustments in 13:11 is evident in Jesus' reference to the crowds as *ἐκείνοις*, which has been stripped of the spatial element that was apparent in Mark's reference to the crowds as *ἐκείνοις... τοῖς ἔξω* (Mark 4:11). This corresponds to Matthew's excision of Mark's notice that the exchange between Jesus and the disciples regarding parables occurred when they were alone (cf. 13:10 to Mark 4:10 [ὅτε ἐγένετο κατὰ μόνας]). Moreover, Luke's version of the Q logion found in Matt 13:17-18 is prefaced with the information that "Jesus turned to his disciples privately [στραφεὶς πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς κατ' ἰδίαν εἶπεν]" (Luke 10:23). If this preface is original to Q, and not Lukan redaction,⁶⁵ this may represent one more instance in Matt 13:10-52 where Matthew has dissolved the spatial cues found in his source material. Yet these Matthean adjustments should not be viewed as evidence of a programmatic redactional agenda aimed at eliminating private interaction between the disciples and Jesus. Indeed, Matthew concurs with Mark's assertion that the disciples' exclusive knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven was directly related to their reception of Jesus' private explanations. Thus, after the narrative comment that Jesus did not speak to the crowds without parables (Matt 13:34), and after the quotation of Ps 78:2, which makes the point that Jesus' parables contained veiled mysteries, Matthew emphasizes that the explanation to the Parable of the Weeds—uniquely Matthean material—is granted to the disciples after Jesus leaves the crowds and enters a house: Τότε ἀφείς τοὺς ὄχλους ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν (13:36). This detail seems to represent Matthew's conscious appropriation of the Markan spatial distinctions between the

65. Note the editorial uncertainty in Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg, *Q*, 196–97.

disciples and crowds in 4:34 primarily, but also in 4:10-11.⁶⁶ It would seem that Matthew's redactional aim (in 13:10-52 at least) is not to collapse Mark's spatial distinctions between the disciples and the crowds; rather, his redactional introduction to the episode, προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταί (13:10), more subtly signals what is clear from context—that 13:10-23 occurred as a private conversation between Jesus and the disciples,⁶⁷ as the content of Jesus' discourse clearly indicates—and he reworks Mark's statement about Jesus' practice of private explanation (i.e., Mark 4:34) into an actual example of such private explanation, when Jesus explains the Parable of the Weeds (13:36ff.).⁶⁸

Therefore, the feature of narrative isolation appears differently in Matt 13:10-52 than in Mark 4:10-34. In one respect, Matthew has removed Mark's use of narrative isolation from the portrayal of the disciples in 13:10-52. Even so, Matthew clearly envisages a private setting for this revelatory exchange between Jesus and the disciples in 13:10-17, as is evident in the sharp contrast between “you” and “them” throughout, and in Jesus' address of the explanation of the Parable of the Sower to the disciples exclusively: ὑμεῖς οὖν ἀκούσατε τὴν παραβολὴν τοῦ σπείραντος (13:18).⁶⁹ However, counterbalancing the removal of Mark's explicit references to

66. Elsewhere, Matthew displays an awareness of the revelatory significance of the disciples' private interaction with Jesus (cf. 10:27).

67. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 387.

68. Contra Gerhard Barth, “Matthew's Understanding of the Law,” in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (by G. Bornkamm, G. Barth, and H. J. Held; NTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 109, who sees Matthew's redaction of Mark 4:34 as “decisive evidence” for Matthew's “rejection of the thesis that Jesus generally had to interpret all the parables especially for the disciples.”

69. The first three words of this introduction to the explanation of the Parable of the Sower, which are unique to Matthew, closely connect the explanation itself with what Jesus has said in 13:11-17 about the disciples (France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 519). The second-person plural pronoun is placed at the beginning of the sentence, just as in Jesus' statements of 13:11 and 13:16, both of which emphasize the contrast between the disciples and the crowds. Clearly, the explanation, which is the continuation of the preceding discourse, is presented as being delivered privately to the disciples. Moreover, Matthew likely intended his redactional gloss in 13:10, Καὶ προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταί εἶπαν αὐτῷ, to mean nearly the same thing as Mark's emphatic Καὶ ὅτε ἐγένετο κατὰ μόνας (4:10). This last point is corroborated by Matthew's use of this same phrase in conjunction with the private explanation of the Parable of the Weeds (καὶ προσελθὼν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταί αὐτοῦ [13:36]).

the private setting of the dialogue in 13:10-23, Matthew has explicitly utilized narrative isolation in 13:36 to construct a private setting for Jesus' explanation of the Parable of the Weeds to his disciples. Even though 13:36 is without parallel, it should probably be considered as evidence for the *indirect* shaping of Matthew's portrayal of the disciples by that of apocalyptic seers, since it likely represents Matthew's appropriation of Mark's use of narrative isolation in 4:10, 11, 34. Yet, that Matthew does not merely reproduce what he found in his source material, but still incorporates the feature into 13:36, suggests that he understood the revelatory significance of the feature in Mark's narrative. In other words, 13:36 suggests that Matthew understood that private settings, where Jesus explained his enigmatic proclamation to the disciples were, in fact, revelatory settings, where the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven were disclosed exclusively to them.

Parables and Cognitive Humanity.

In the discussion of Mark 4:1-34 in the previous chapter, we observed that Mark has highlighted the disciples' cognitive humanity in conjunction with Jesus' enigmatic proclamation. This accords with the way that the apocalypses highlight the cognitive humanity of their seers when they encounter the mysteries of the divine realm. According to Mark, the disciples, like apocalyptic seers, required explanations of veiled presentations of mysteries in order to understand their significance. Thus, the disciples are portrayed as asking Jesus for explanations (cf. 4:10), and Jesus expresses surprise at their cognitive humanity (cf. 4:13), much like mediators of revelation sometimes do. Matthew has retained the disciples' cognitive humanity as an aspect of their portrayal in 13:1-52, though not without reshaping and redirecting his Markan source material.

First, Mark's narrative comment that the disciples asked Jesus about the parables (ἡρώτων αὐτὸν οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν σὺν τοῖς δώδεκα τὰς παραβολάς [4:10]) has changed in Matthew. We had previously noted that Mark 4:10 likely envisages a

question about both the reason for the parables and their meaning. Matthew, on the other hand, places direct speech on the mouths of the disciples, and their question is only concerned with discovering Jesus' reason for speaking in parables, not with their explanations: διὰ τί ἐν παραβολαῖς λαλεῖς αὐτοῖς; (13:10). However, at a later point, and in association with his special material, Matthew portrays the disciples as requesting an explanation of the Parable of the Weeds: διασάφῃσον ἡμῖν τὴν παραβολὴν τῶν ζιζανίων τοῦ ἀγροῦ (13:36). Therefore, despite Matthew's alteration of Mark 4:10, it remains clear that the disciples, on account of their cognitive humanity, required explanations of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation in order to understand the mysteries concealed therein.⁷⁰ This is a point that Matthew reinforces as the narrative unfolds.

Second, Matthew has omitted Mark 4:13, where Jesus expresses his surprise at the disciples' inability to understand the Parable of the Sower. Scholars have viewed this omission as evidence for Matthew's aim of rehabilitating the Markan portrayal of the disciples as those who do not understand Jesus.⁷¹ According to this position, Jesus' statement in Mark 4:13 reflects a negative or less-than-favorable portrayal of the Markan disciples' understanding; Matthew then read the passage in this way and decided to omit Mark 4:13 as a result of his concern to portray the disciples positively (at least in this case) as those who understand Jesus. However, these conclusions have been established apart from any consideration of the apocalyptic background for Jesus' expression of surprise in Mark 4:13. The result of this is that the continuity between the portrayal of the disciples' understanding in Mark 4:1-34 and Matt 13:1-52 has been minimized. In light of this, a more nuanced

70. Cf. Jeannine K. Brown, *Disciples*, 109–10.

71. Cf. Jack D. Kingsbury, *The Parables of Jesus in Matthew 13: A Study in Redaction-Criticism* (Richmond: John Knox, 1969), 41–42; Luz, "The Disciples in the Gospel According to Matthew," 102–5.

assessment of Matthew's omission of Mark 4:13, as it relates to his redactional agenda, is required.

In the previous chapter, the point was made that Jesus' expression of surprise in Mark 4:13—like similar expressions of surprise voiced by mediators of revelation in the apocalypses—is not necessarily designed to build a negative portrayal of the disciples, even if it does not reflect positively on them. Instead, its rhetorical function is to reinforce the portrayal of the disciples as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries by highlighting their cognitive humanity against the backdrop of the mystery of the kingdom of God. Indeed, this reflects Mark's awareness of the fact that, in the apocalypse genre, apocalyptic seers were always dependent on a divine mediator of revelation in order to understand the veiled presentations of mysteries to which they were exposed. Human requests for explanation, and divine expressions of surprise at such requests, are the rhetorical preludes to the explanations that rendered divine mysteries comprehensible to humanity. Therefore, it is questionable that Mark 4:13 is meant to reflect negatively on the disciples, especially since Mark's main point in 4:1-34 is a positive one—that the disciples are the exclusive recipients of the mystery of the kingdom of God in contradistinction to all others. Matthew's omission of Mark 4:13, then, may not be due to an inherent incompatibility between this statement and a positive portrayal of the disciples' understanding.⁷²

Counter to the view that Matthew's omission of Mark 4:13 reflects his attempt to convert Mark's negative portrayal of the disciples into a positive one, it is more probable that the omission merely reflects a shift in emphases. Whereas Mark emphasized the disciples' degree of understanding *prior* to Jesus' explanations, Matthew has redirected the emphasis to their degree of understanding *after* Jesus' explanations. Indeed, both Evangelists agree that the disciples could not understand

72. Although it cannot be entirely ruled out that Matthew omitted Mark 4:13 because he read it as reflecting negatively on the disciples, if this were the case, it is striking that he did not also omit Mark 7:18 from 15:16 (ἀκούην καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀσύνετοί ἐστε;).

the parables apart from Jesus' explanations.⁷³ However, Mark merely implies through statements such as 4:33-34 that Jesus' explanations enabled the disciples to understand his enigmatic proclamation, but Matthew makes this explicit for the reader. This is evident in the terse exchange between Jesus and the disciples that Matthew places at the conclusion to the narrative section concerning parables: *Συνήκατε ταῦτα πάντα; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· ναί* (13:51). This statement likely represents Matthew's awareness of a rhetorical feature of the apocalypses, which emphasizes that the seer has understood the significance of the mysteries that have been revealed to him. For example, at the conclusion to Levi's second dream concerning the priesthood, he says, "When I awoke, I understood that this was like the first dream" (*T. Levi* 8:18). Similarly, after Enoch has read the heavenly tablets, he reports that he "came to understand everything" (*I En.* 81:2). Moreover, Enoch's understanding is also a clear focus of the introduction to *I Enoch*, and it supports the credibility of the entire corpus: "From the words of the watchers and holy ones I heard everything; and as I heard everything from them, I also understood what I saw" (*I En.* 1:2).⁷⁴ Thus, in 13:51, Matthew uses rhetoric that is common to the apocalypses in order to highlight that Jesus' explanations of his enigmatic proclamation have enabled the disciples to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, which remain veiled to all others (cf. 13:11, 34-35).⁷⁵ With 13:51 Matthew does not make a different point than Mark about the disciples' understanding; rather, he makes explicit that Jesus' explanations enabled the disciples to understand his enigmatic proclamation, whereas this was only implied in Mark 4:33-34. Although Matthew agrees with Mark's point that the disciples could not understand Jesus's parables apart from explanations, he has not retained Mark 4:13, which forcefully makes this point, and so shifts the emphasis of

73. Contra Barth, "Matthew's Understanding of the Law," 105–12.

74. Cf. also *2 Bar.* 43:1; *Dan* 10:1 (Th).

75. Since the apocalypses provide a precedent for this feature (cf. Orton, *Understanding Scribe*, 144–45), one need not view Matthew's emphasis of the disciples' understanding as a post-Easter characteristic of the church, as does Barth, "Matthew's Understanding of the Law," 105–12.

the section to the degree of the disciples' understanding after the explanations, rather than before them.

Matthew's concern to underscore the disciples' understanding in 13:51 is also related to his polemic against the scribes and Pharisees. In our discussion of 11:25-27, we concluded that Jesus' reference to those who had *not* received revelation of "these things" as the σοφοί and συνετοί likely reflects a polemic against the self-estimation of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus' point was that those who presumed to be the ones who would discern the work of God in the last days had not lived up to their assumed status. Instead, the Father had revealed "these things" to others, whom the supposed "wise and understanding" considered to be mere "children." Now, in 13:11-17 generally, and in 13:51 particularly, Matthew makes the point that the disciples are actually those who possessed understanding with regard to the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven—i.e., the eschatological mysteries of the last days.⁷⁶ In other words, Matthew redefines who constitutes the eschatological "wise and understanding" by showing that the disciples possess exclusive knowledge and understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.⁷⁷

Verse 52, then, is probably designed to link the disciples' understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to the Matthean community:⁷⁸ διὰ τοῦτο πᾶς γραμματεὺς μαθητευθεὶς τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν ὁμοίός ἐστιν ἀνθρώπῳ οἰκοδεσπότῃ, ὅστις ἐκβάλλει ἐκ τοῦ θησαυροῦ αὐτοῦ καὶ καινὰ καὶ παλαιά. This statement seems to presuppose that the disciples will pass their exclusive knowledge of mysteries to scribal students, who will presumably promulgate these mysteries

76. "The major point is that the disciples have indeed understood Jesus' discourse and therefore qualify as skilled scribes" (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 444); so Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution* (2 ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 281.

77. Orton, *Understanding Scribe*, 147, may be correct that 13:51 is designed to identify the disciples as the *maskilim* of Dan 12:10.

78. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 444–46; Anthony O. Ewherido, *Matthew's Gospel and Judaism in the Late First Century C.E.: The Evidence from Matthew's Chapter on Parables (Matthew 13:1–52)* (Studies in Biblical Literature 91; New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 174–82.

among the righteous in the last days, as Matthew's Gospel does.⁷⁹ There is no agreement about the identification of the scribes in 13:52, but there is little reason to doubt that they would have represented some among the Matthean community—perhaps those charged with providing a Christian exegesis of Scripture, mapping the movement onto Israel's eschatological expectations, while merging this exegesis with the teaching stemming from Jesus and his disciples.⁸⁰ Indeed, scribes are envisaged among those who continue Jesus' ministry in 23:34,⁸¹ representing the antithesis of the scribes and Pharisees who persecute them, whom Jesus has denounced with a succession of seven woes (23:13-33). Regardless of their precise identity, the scribes of 13:52 seem to be promoted as those who stand in continuity with the disciples, inheriting their understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.⁸² In this way, the Matthean community, like the disciples before them, are shown to be those who possess eschatological discernment in the last days. This closely parallels the rhetoric of the apocalypses, which portray their seers as those whose understanding of mysteries is transmitted to the terminal audience, who lives in the last days. Thus, 13:51-52 may represent a point where Matthew's portrayal of the disciples as exclusive recipients and transmitters of revealed mysteries has been directly shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers.

Summary.

Matthew reproduces the exclusionary statement of Mark 4:11, though with redactional and substantive adjustments. Although the redactional adjustments are relatively minor, the three substantive adjustments are significant. First, Matthew

79. Whether 13:51-52 is evidence for a Matthean "school" is another question (cf. Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew* [ASNU 20; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1954], 30).

80. Hannan, *Nature and Demands*, 119; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Robert R. Barr; Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2002), 135–36.

81. Robert H. Gundry, "On True and False Disciples in Matthew 8:18–22," *NTS* 40, no. 3 (1994): 433–41 makes the case that 8:18-22 presents two scribes who claim to be disciples, though he views only the first as a true disciple.

82. Orton, *Understanding Scribe*, 151.

places Mark 4:15 directly after his reproduction of Mark 4:11, the effect of which is to attribute to the disciples an ongoing multiplication of insight into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, while simultaneously removing such insight from other claimants. In this way, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, granted exclusively to the disciples, are promoted as the crowning edition of all apocalyptic insight into eschatological mysteries. Second, Matthew has included a full quotation of Isa 6:9-10, which he has combined with a Q logion so as to explicitly contrast the disciples' seeing eyes and ears with those of unrepentant Israel. Third, Matthew's appropriation of the Q logion has the additional rhetorical aim of asserting that the disciples' insight into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven moves beyond the insight possessed even by Israel's prophets and righteous of old. Therefore, along with his redactional adjustments, Matthew's substantive adjustments are designed to escalate the portrayal of the disciples as the exclusive recipients of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. On the other hand, Matthew's redaction has attenuated the spatial aspects of Mark 4:10-11, 34, but his unique material affirms Mark's basic point that the explanations of parables were delivered to the disciples in private settings. Therefore, narrative isolation is still a feature in Matthew's portrayal of the disciples here, though not as prominent nor as conspicuous as in the Markan parallel.

Matthew has also affirmed Mark's point that the disciples' cognitive humanity prevents them from understanding Jesus' veiled presentation of mysteries in his enigmatic proclamation. Thus, their cognitive humanity requires that they ask him for an explanation of the Parable of the Weeds. However, by omitting Mark 4:13 and including 13:51-52, Matthew attenuates Mark's emphasis on the disciples' cognitive humanity *prior* to Jesus' explanations, focusing rather on the point that the explanations enable them to achieve understanding. This is not a different point than Mark makes, but only a different emphasis, underscoring that the disciples progress past the limitations of their cognitive humanity with regard to the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

In 13:1-52, Matthew's portrayal of the disciples as the exclusive recipients of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and as humans encountering the mysteries of the divine realm, has been shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers indirectly via Mark's Gospel and Q. Matthew has appropriated Mark's revelatory paradigm for parables, which dictates that mysteries are exclusively revealed to the disciples through Jesus' explanations in private settings. Thus, as in Mark's Gospel, the disciples collectively occupy the role of an apocalyptic seer, and Jesus functions as a mediator of revelation. Matthew's appropriation of Q further supports the disciples' exclusive status. As was the case in Mark 4:1-34, there is no special focus on Peter in Matt 13:1-52. However, in addition to 11:25-27, Jesus' exclusionary statement in 13:11-17 is integral to understanding Matthew's emphasis on Peter's prominence among this group, which becomes evident elsewhere in the narrative.

Additional Expressions of the Paradigm

Matthew 13:1-52, following Mark 4:1-34, has established a basic paradigm that is associated with Jesus' enigmatic proclamation. His public, enigmatic proclamation consists of veiled mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, which are then exclusively disclosed to the disciples through Jesus' explanations in private settings. In Mark's Gospel, this paradigm was recapitulated at several other points in the narrative. Therefore, it is relevant to observe Matthew's redaction of these episodes, noting whether the portrayal of the disciples in them has been shaped by the portrayals of apocalyptic seers. There are also other, non-Markan passages that evince some relationship to the paradigm established in 13:1-52.

Cleanliness and the Kingdom of Heaven.

Matthew's portrayal of the disciples in 15:1-21 generally parallels that of Mark 7:1-23, and so also includes features that appear in the portrayals of apocalyptic seers. Jesus publicly speaks a parable related to cleanliness, which he later explains

to the disciples, thereby disclosing some mystery of the kingdom exclusively to them. However, as in 13:1-52, Matthew has adapted his Markan source material. First, Mark's specific notice that the disciples requested an explanation when Jesus was in the house, away from the crowd (ὅτε εἰσῆλθεν εἰς οἶκον ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου [7:17]) has been softened in Matthew. Matthew says only that the disciples came to Jesus (Τότε προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ [15:12; cf. 13:10, 36]). This exhibits the same redactional tendency that was evident in 13:1-52, where Matthew weakened Mark's sharp spatial distinctions between the disciples and crowds (cf. 13:11 to Mark 4:10-11). Therefore, although Matthew clearly envisages a private dialogue here between Jesus and the disciples, he does not deploy narrative isolation with the same force that Mark does. Second, Matthew begins the private dialogue between Jesus and the disciples not with the request for an explanation of his parable, but with a different question. The disciples ask Jesus whether he realizes that he had offended the Pharisees with his Isaianic denunciation of their traditions as mere human teaching: οἶδας ὅτι οἱ Φαρισαῖοι ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον ἐσκανδαλίσθησαν; (15:12). In Jesus' following statement, Matthew fleshes out the polemic against the leadership and their teaching that was apparent in Jesus' public interaction with them, moving beyond his Markan source. This addition was perhaps designed to elaborate on the explanation of the Parable of the Weeds, directly identifying the Pharisees and their halakah with the sons of the evil one (cf. 13:36-43). Third, Mark's statement that the disciples asked Jesus about the parable (ἐπηρώτων αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ τὴν παραβολὴν [7:17]) has been replaced with a direct request for an explanation on the lips of Peter:⁸³ Ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Πέτρος εἶπεν αὐτῷ· φράσον ἡμῖν τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην (15:15). Thus, Peter functions as a spokesman for the disciples,⁸⁴ voicing their cognitive

83. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 534, relate Peter's prominence here to the rejection of Pharisaic teaching, and the portrayal of Peter as the "guardian of the new tradition." Gundry, *Matthew*, 307, sees Peter here as "the typical disciple."

84. So Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 97; Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 184.

humanity and dependency upon Jesus' explanations for the ability to understand the mysteries that are veiled in his parables.⁸⁵ In light of our discussion in the previous section regarding Matthew's omission of Jesus' surprised response to the disciples' request for explanation in Mark 4:13, it is noteworthy that Matthew retains Mark 7:18 in Jesus' explanation of the parable to the disciples: ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· ἀκμὴν καὶ ὑμεῖς ἁσύνετοί ἐστε; (15:16). Although this is certainly not a positive statement, we should avoid the simplistic conclusion that Peter's question and Jesus' response reflect a negative portrayal of Peter,⁸⁶ since their exchange is analogous to what is found in the apocalypses.

Therefore, as in 13:1-52, Matthew's portrayal of the disciples has been indirectly influenced by that of apocalyptic seers, via Mark's Gospel. The disciples exclusively receive Jesus' explanation of the parable, which discloses to them some aspect of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Although the explanation is delivered to the disciples in a private dialogue with Jesus, Matthew does not utilize the feature of narrative isolation with the same degree of emphasis as his Markan source. Yet, Matthew still underscores their cognitive humanity by including Peter's request for an explanation and Jesus' surprised response to it. Matthew uniquely attributes the request for explanation to Peter, which perhaps highlights his role as spokesman for the larger group of disciples, and constitutes a Matthean elaboration

85. Kingsbury and Nau view Peter's spokesman role here as "positive" (Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 69; Nau, *Peter*, 25). Wilkins, probably on account of Jesus' response, classifies it as "slightly negative" (Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 240). These divergent conclusions illustrate a problem in narrative criticism more generally, i.e., the absence of any control for establishing ancient perceptions of "positive," "negative," and "neutral" features of a particular character's portrayal.

86. Cf. Wallace W. Bubar, "Killing Two Birds with One Stone: The Utter De(con)Struction of Matthew and His Church," *BibInt* 3, no. 2 (1995): 148. Brown concludes that Jesus' response to Peter's request calls into question the understanding that the disciples professed in 13:51 (Jeannine K. Brown, *Disciples*, 110–11). However, this fails to recognize that both 13:51 and 15:15–16 are standard features of portrayals of apocalyptic seers. Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 184–85, sees Peter's role in 15:15 as that of "representative spokespersonship" resulting in "negative prominence." David L. Turner, *Matthew* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 382, more reservedly says that "Jesus's question...casts the disciples' degree of understanding in a negative light."

of Peter's prominence in Mark 8:2-9:13. Jesus' explanation discloses to the disciples halakah associated with the nearness of the kingdom of heaven, which represents the antithesis of the human teaching advocated by the Pharisees.

The Yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

In Mark 8:14, Jesus warns the disciples against the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod. In the previous chapter, we considered this episode in our discussion of Jesus' messianic identity and mode, since its main point was that the disciples had failed to perceive some aspect of Jesus' identity that was revealed in his feeding miracles. In fact, the significance of Jesus' enigmatic reference to yeast is never taken up by Mark, and the episode concludes with Jesus' question about whether the disciples do not yet understand the implication of his miraculous feedings. However, Matthew's version of this episode should be treated as an additional expression of the paradigm associated with Jesus' enigmatic proclamation in 13:1-52, since Matthew ultimately focuses on the significance of Jesus' reference to yeast.

Matthew has made several notable redactional changes to the episode. First, in his version, Jesus speaks not of the yeast of the Pharisees and Herod, but of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees. This reflects a concern that Matthew exhibits elsewhere to include the Sadducees in the polemic against the Pharisees.⁸⁷ Second, Jesus' response to the disciples' conversation about the significance of his reference to yeast still highlights their cognitive humanity, though it does so somewhat differently than in Mark's version. Jesus still asks whether the disciples have not understood (οὐπω νοεῖτε...), but Matthew has omitted the remainder of the Markan version of the question, wherein Jesus asks whether the disciples, like the crowds, have also fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy of those who had hard hearts, eyes that failed to see, and ears that failed to hear or understand (Mark 8:17-18). For Matthew, the

87. In addition to 22:23, which reproduces a Markan parallel, note Matthew's unique mention of the Sadducees in 3:7; 16:1; 22:34, and the three times in the episode under consideration (16:6, 11, 12).

disciples' failure to remember Jesus' previous provision of bread amidst their current lack of bread reflects their status as ὀλιγόπιστοι, and there is no threat of them being considered among unrepentant and obdurate Israel. After all, Matthew had used his Q source material earlier to explicitly contrast the disciples' seeing eyes and hearing ears from the imperceptive eyes and ears of unrepentant Israel (13:13-17). Third, rather than concluding the episode with Jesus' question about whether they did not yet understand (cf. Mark 8:21), Matthew portrays Jesus as asking them, πῶς οὐ νοεῖτε ὅτι οὐ περὶ ἄρτων εἶπον ὑμῖν; (16:11). With this, he resumes the original focus of the episode on the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Then, following Jesus' clarification that he was not referring to literal bread, Matthew highlights that the disciples did, in fact, acquire an understanding that the yeast referred to the teaching of these groups: τότε συνῆκαν ὅτι οὐκ εἶπεν προσέχειν ἀπὸ τῆς ζύμης τῶν ἄρτων ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ τῆς διδαχῆς τῶν Φαρισαίων καὶ Σαδδουκαίων (16:12). Thus, as in his redaction elsewhere, Matthew emphasizes that the disciples overcome their initial cognitive humanity with regard to Jesus' enigmatic proclamation, ultimately understanding its veiled significance (cf. 13:51; 17:13).

Certain Kinds of Spirits and the Assault on Satan's Kingdom.

Mark 9:14-29 conforms to the paradigm associated with parables in some respects, while deviating from this paradigm in other respects. The same is true with regard to the parallel passage in Matt 17:14-20. Thus, we see an episode of public activity—not enigmatic proclamation—followed by a private request for, and delivery of, an explanation to the disciples. As in Mark's other deployments of narrative isolation in conjunction with Jesus' private explanations, Matthew does not leave this one untouched. Matthew removes Mark's detail that the explanation to the disciples occurred after Jesus had entered the house (Καὶ εἰσελθόντος αὐτοῦ εἰς οἶκον [Mark 9:29]), but he retains the detail that they requested the explanation privately: Τότε προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ τῷ Ἰησοῦ κατ' ἰδίαν εἶπον (17:19). The

private explanation, however, no longer communicates exorcistic technique to the disciples,⁸⁸ as in Mark 9:14-29. Instead, Jesus attributes the disciples' exorcistic inability to their lack of faith—something that they struggle with at other points in the Gospel as well (8:26; 14:31; 16:8; cf. 28:17).

The Kingdom and the Temple Tax.

The matter of the temple tax involves only Peter as an individual. After Peter interacts with the collectors of the temple tax, Matthew uses narrative isolation to construct a private setting for his following interaction with Jesus: καὶ ἐλθόντα εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν (17:25). This episode displays variation from the paradigm established in 13:10-52. Jesus does not present a parable publicly; his speech is entirely directed towards Peter privately (though the disciples are present to overhear). Jesus asks Peter about whom the kings of the earth collect their taxes from. After Peter's correct answer, Jesus then explains why he and Peter indeed pay the temple tax, even though this conflicts with the principle that Peter's answer had acknowledged—that the sons of the kingdom are exempt from the tax (17:26).⁸⁹

The form of Peter's interaction with Jesus matches what can be found in *4 Ezra*, where the seer engages in private question-and-answer dialogue with a divine mediator of revelation. The angel Uriel tells Ezra, "Ask a woman's womb, and say to it, 'If you bear ten children, why one after another?' Request it therefore to produce ten at one time" (*4 Ezra* 5:46). To this Ezra replies, "Of course it cannot, but only each in its own time" (5:47). Ezra's reply eventuates Uriel's comment, "Even so have I given the womb of the earth to those who from time to time are sown in it. For as an infant does not bring forth, and a woman who has become old does not bring forth any longer, so have I organized the world which I created" (5:49). Although the topic of Ezra's dialogue with Uriel is much different from Peter's dialogue with Jesus, the

88. However, some mss do include a comment regarding exorcistic technique: κ^2 C D L W f^{1.13} \mathfrak{M} lat (sy^{p,h}) (mae) bo^{pt}; Or. These are likely corrections towards the text of Mark 9:29.

89. Cf. Luz, *Matthew* 8–20, 417–18.

basic pattern of question by the mediator (cf. 17:25), answer by the seer (cf. v. 26a), and then a final comment by the mediator is the same in both places (cf. v. 26b-27). In this episode, Matthew portrays Peter individually as one who interacts with Jesus in the manner of an apocalyptic seer, receiving divine disclosure of halakah concerning payment of the temple tax.

The Community of the Kingdom.

In Matt 18, Jesus delivers teaching to the disciples regarding status and inclusion in the community of the kingdom. The teaching in this section does not strictly conform to the paradigm established in 13:1-52. In ch. 18, Jesus indeed speaks in parables, but he does not direct them to the crowds before privately explaining them to the disciples. Instead, the entire dialogue of parable and explanation occurs as a block of private teaching to the disciples. This is likely what Matthew intends to signal with his introductory redactional statement, προσῆλθον οἱ μαθηταὶ τῷ Ἰησοῦ (18:1). Additionally, the parables in this section do not always precede the explanation, but sometimes elaborate upon the explanation.

The section begins with the disciples' question about who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus parabolically compares greatness in the kingdom to childlikeness (18:2-4), and he speaks to the responsibility of the community to accept children and to not lead them towards sin (18:5-9). Jesus uses the Parable of the Lost Sheep to further illustrate the heavenly status of children, and the responsibility of the community towards them. Then, Jesus plainly teaches about what to do when a brother sins against the disciples in 18:15-17, which seems to be a foregrounded explanation of the more enigmatic statement about binding and loosing, and exercising Jesus' authority over the community (18:18-20). Flowing out of this topic, Peter raises the question about the extent of forgiveness for the brother who sins against him, but apparently repents each time (18:21).⁹⁰ Jesus plainly states the

90. Although scholars often emphasize the deficiency of Peter's request and relate this to a

limitlessness of the forgiveness offered in such a case (18:22), and then illustrates the principle with a parable (18:23-35).

Although these parables and explanations deviate from the normal paradigm, there is enough overlap to suggest that Matthew conceived of this private dialogue between Jesus and the disciples as a disclosure of mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. The discussion is prompted by a question about “the kingdom of heaven,” and the phrase occurs twice more in Jesus’ speech (18:4, 23). The topic throughout is clearly how the community should function under the leadership of the Twelve, as the earthly expression of the kingdom of heaven. Again, the form of this dialogue most closely matches the question-and-answer dialogue between Ezra and the angel Uriel in *4 Ezra*. Ezra’s questions are repeatedly answered with parables that illustrate the explanation (e.g., *4 Ezra* 5:41-55). The disciples’ question in 18:1 and Peter’s question in 18:21 therefore seem to represent expressions of cognitive humanity that result in the disclosure of divine mysteries. Thus, the disciples collectively act as apocalyptic seers in 18:1, but Peter does so individually in 18:21, as in 17:24-27.

Divorce in the Kingdom.

In Mark 10:1-12, the disciples privately request an explanation of Jesus’ enigmatic statement that, in the case of marriage, humans should not separate what God has joined together (10:8-9). However, Matthew has removed any reference to the privacy of their dialogue with Jesus, and he also reworks their question into a pronouncement. Thus, the disciples exclaim: εἰ οὕτως ἐστὶν ἡ αἰτία τοῦ ἀνθρώπου μετὰ τῆς γυναικός, οὐ συμφέρει γαμῆσαι (Matt 19:10). Their statement articulates the perceived difficulty of Jesus’ teaching against divorce, and occasions Jesus’ further teaching, which qualifies the disciples’ assessment that it is better to remain

negative portrayal of him (e.g., Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 209–10; Nau, *Peter*, 25), Luz makes the point that Peter’s question may not be about limiting forgiveness; it may have the sense of “Is perfect forgiveness expected of me?” (Luz, *Matthew 8–20*, 465). Either way, it is an expression of his cognitive humanity with regard to the matter of forgiveness among the kingdom community.

unmarried. Although we observed in ch. 4 that apocalyptic seers utter pronouncements from their human point of view,⁹¹ there is not enough evidence to conclude that such pronouncements provided the impetus for the disciples' pronouncement in 19:10. Moreover, since Matthew has removed Mark's use of narrative isolation, and since Jesus no longer provides an explanation of his enigmatic proclamation in Matthew's version of this episode, it is doubtful that the portrayal of the disciples in this episode has been influenced at all by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers. Matthew's redaction of this episode, therefore, seems to depart from the Markan portrayal of the disciples in Mark 10:1-12 as the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries.

The Temple and the Establishment of the Kingdom.

After denouncing the scribes and Pharisees with a series of seven woes (23:1-36), and after indicting Jerusalem as a murderer of prophets (23:37), Jesus proclaims that the temple is desolate (23:38). He then prophesies that it will be destroyed, having not one stone remaining upon another (24:2). In what follows this prophecy, Matthew essentially retains Mark's portrayal of the disciples, which had been shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers.⁹²

Matthew, like Mark, uses the feature of narrative isolation to construct a private setting where Jesus delivers an expanded explanation of this prophecy, thereby disclosing mysteries of the kingdom. Yet, unlike Mark, who says that only Peter, James, John, and Andrew were present, Matthew includes the entire group of disciples in this private setting: Καθημένους δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦ ὄρους τῶν ἐλαιῶν

91. E.g., *1 En.* 38:2; *2 En.* 42:2; *4 Ezra* 4:12; 7:63, 69.

92. Somewhat differently, Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 328, discern a presentation of Jesus "as seer of the eschatological future." Yet the view that Jesus functions as a mediator of revelation, which places the disciples in the role of apocalyptic seers, has the advantage of accounting for the fact that the disciples ask questions which express concerns that are normally voiced by apocalyptic seers in the apocalypses.

προσηλθον αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ κατ' ἰδίαν (24:3).⁹³ Narrative isolation in 24:3 signals that the disciples are the exclusive recipients of eschatological mysteries revealed by Jesus.

Matthew also retains Mark's portrayal of the disciples as those exhibiting the cognitive humanity that is normal for apocalyptic seers who receive disclosures of eschatological mysteries. The disciples express their cognitive humanity through specific questions regarding Jesus' prophecy about the temple: εἰπὲ ἡμῖν, πότε ταῦτα ἔσται καὶ τί τὸ σημεῖον τῆς σῆς παρουσίας καὶ συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος; (24:3). Although these questions are very similar to the ones posed in Mark 13:4, Matthew has made a couple noteworthy redactional changes. First, just as Matthew has expanded the group of present disciples from four to perhaps twelve, he has placed these questions on the lips of the group, rather than on the lips of an individual disciple.⁹⁴ Thus, in place of Mark's singular ἐπηρώτα, there is now only the masculine plural participle, λέγοντες (24:3). In light of Matthew's redaction elsewhere, it is somewhat surprising that he did not exploit this opportunity afforded by the singular verb in Mark 13:3 to highlight Peter's role as spokesman for the group. Second, Matthew is more specific about what the disciples ask in the latter of their two questions. In Mark, this question was for "the sign that all these things are about to be fulfilled" (καὶ τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα; [Mark 13:4]). In Matthew, the disciples ask more specifically about the sign of the parousia and of the end of the age (24:3). This adjustment to their question brings it more closely in line with what Jesus discloses in the following discourse (cf. 24:30). Still, like Mark, these questions exhibit Matthew's concern to portray the disciples as

93. Kähler relates this broadening to a redactional *Tendenz* of Matthew, which seeks to avoid the combination of the smaller circle of disciples where possible. Such redaction distinguishes Peter from all others: "Petrus konkurrierende Sprecher werden eliminiert, er ist der unbestritten erste unter den Zwölf" (Kähler, "Zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte von Matth. xvi. 17–19," 41). In contrast, Kingsbury sees this as Matthew's down-playing of Peter's "peculiar role" (Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 73).

94. Cf. Luke 21:7.

asking what apocalyptic seers normally do—questions about the *chronology* and *signs* associated with God's appointed time of the end.⁹⁵ Such questions express the seer's desire to understand broad prophecies about the end, and to secure precise details about when and how the end will unfold.

By way of additional material, Matthew builds upon the conclusion of Jesus' discourse in Mark 13. There, Jesus concluded his discourse with a parable which compares the disciples' situation to that of servants awaiting the return of their master (Mark 13:34-37). The basic point is that the servants should conduct themselves so as to warrant their master's favor when he returns at a time that they do not expect. Although Matthew does not reproduce this exact parable, he includes other parables that make a similar point about the necessity for vigilance (24:36-25:30). However, Matthew's conclusion moves beyond this point, since it provides the disciples with information regarding the judgment at the end of the age. The Son of Man will sit on the throne of his glory with the nations gathered before him, and he will separate the wicked from the righteous (25:31-46). By including this judgment scene in Jesus' response to the disciples' questions of 24:3, Matthew has moved considerably beyond the kind of insight that Mark had portrayed them as receiving from Jesus. In other words, Matthew has not only portrayed them as the exclusive recipients of eschatological mysteries concerning the chronology and signs associated with God's appointed time of the end, but he has also portrayed them as receiving insight concerning personal eschatology at the judgment.

Summary.

Beyond the presentation of Jesus' parabolic teaching in 13:1-52, there are six other points in the narrative where the portrayal of apocalyptic seers has influenced the portrayal of Peter and the disciples in connection with Jesus' enigmatic proclamation (15:1-21; 16:5-12; 17:14-23, 24-27; 18:1-35; 24:1-25:46). In these

95. Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 337.

episodes, Matthew continues the redactional tendencies that were observed in 13:1-52. Thus, Matthew softens Mark's use of narrative isolation in two episodes (15:1-21; 17:14-20), preferring to leave this somewhat less insistent. Matthew generally retains Mark's emphasis on the disciples' cognitive humanity, though he removes Jesus' rebuke that followed (in the Markan parallel) their confusion about his reference to the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Instead, Matthew indicates that the disciples understood what Jesus meant after his clarification, much like his emphasis of their understanding in 13:51. At three points (15:15; 17:24-27; 18:21-22), Matthew draws increasing focus to Peter, twice placing a request for explanation on his lips, and once a response to Jesus' question. However, in another case, Matthew dissolves Mark's identification of Peter as one of four disciples to whom Jesus revealed eschatological mysteries concerning the end of the age. Matthew's incorporation of special material (25:31-46) shows the disciples to have exclusive insight into mysteries of personal eschatology, as apocalyptic seers often do. Matthew's incorporation of personal eschatology into Jesus' disclosures to the disciples is an impulse that he will continue elsewhere in the narrative. Finally, our analysis concluded that 19:1-12 has been stripped of the features in its Markan parallel that matched the features found in the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers.

Conclusion

This section has argued that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers as the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, and as humans encountering the divine realm, has influenced Matthew's portrayal of Peter and the disciples in connection with Jesus' enigmatic proclamation.

Matthew uses the exclusionary statement of 13:11 to identify the disciples as those who have exclusive access to the mysteries of the kingdom. Matthew has elaborated on this exclusionary statement in 13:12-17, reinforcing the basic contrast

stated there, but also contrasting the disciples from positive figures, whom they surpassed in revelatory insight. This reflects the kind of comparison that is also made in apocalypses such as *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, where the seer is portrayed as surpassing previous venerable figures in the degree of disclosure made available to him.

Matthew, like Mark, portrays the disciples as being dependent upon Jesus in order to understand the significance of his enigmatic proclamation, which is similar to how apocalyptic seers are dependent upon a divine mediator of revelation in order to understand the significance of what they observe. Thus, in six places the disciples request explanations from him (13:36; 15:15; 17:19; 18:1, 21; 24:3), which he privately delivers to them, as is signalled by Matthew's use of narrative isolation (13:36; 17:19, 25; 18:1; 24:3). That Jesus' explanations enable them to progress beyond the limitations of their cognitive humanity is signalled by Matthew's emphasis of their understanding (13:52; 16:12), which is similar to the emphasis placed on an apocalyptic seer's understanding following his reception of divinely explained mysteries. Therefore, Matthew emphasizes their degree of understanding *after* Jesus' explanations, rather than *before* them as in Mark. Nevertheless, there are two places where Matthew has retained Jesus' surprised responses to the disciples' cognitive humanity (15:16; 16:8-11), which serves to underscore their cognitive humanity when encountering heavenly mysteries. As in Mark, the disciples collectively occupy the role of an apocalyptic seer, with Jesus functioning as a mediator of revelation, disclosing aspects of the πάντα that have been entrusted to him.

As in Mark's Gospel, the influence of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers generally comes to bear on Peter inasmuch as it has also come to bear on the groups of disciples to which he belongs. There are three exceptions to this, however. In two places, Peter individually expresses the cognitive humanity that the disciples elsewhere collectively express (15:15; 18:21). Once, in 17:25-27, Peter individually

engages in question-and-answer dialogue with Jesus, which matches the style of revelatory dialogue in *4 Ezra* especially. Matthew's special focus on Peter in these cases might simply represent his more extended deployment of Peter's prominence as found in Mark 8:27-9:13. There is the additional possibility that the focus on Peter in 15:15, which is purely a result of Matthean redaction, was designed to more directly and individually contrast Peter, who receives disclosure of mysteries through Jesus' explanation, with the scribes and Pharisees, whose halakah is mere human tradition. If so, this would suggest the special importance that Peter had for Matthew with regard to a separate stream of halakah in Judaism,⁹⁶ stemming from Jesus as a mystery of the kingdom of heaven, rather than from the traditions of the scribes and Pharisees. Such a notion is corroborated by Peter's prominence in connection with other halakic aspects of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven in 17:24-27 and 18:21.

Jesus' Messianic Identity and Mode

The portrayal of apocalyptic seers as the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, and as humans encountering the divine realm, has influenced Matthew's portrayal of Peter and the disciples in connection with Jesus' messianic identity and mode. Peter is portrayed as the exclusive recipient of revelation from the Father concerning Jesus' messianic identity. However, Peter's conception of Jesus' messianic mode is clouded by his cognitive humanity. His human point of view prevents him from accepting that rejection, suffering, and death characterize Jesus' messianic mode as the Son of Man. Following Jesus' rebuke, Peter and two others observe the transfiguration, wherein they view Jesus as the heavenly Son of Man, and the Father confirms Jesus' messianic identity to them.

96. Cf. Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung*, 59; Kähler, "Zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte von Matth. xvi. 17–19," 40; Perkins, *Peter*, 66.

Jesus' Messianic Identity

In our discussion of Matt 11:25-27, we observed that Jesus' exclusionary statement attributed revelation from the Father to the disciples. Specifically, the Father had revealed "these things" to them. The narrative context of the exclusionary statement suggests that "these things" refers especially to the significance of Jesus (and John) with reference to God's kingdom work. Moreover, the exclusionary statement states that only the Son knows the Father, and that knowledge of Father is exclusively revealed by the Son; and since the Father alone knows the Son, the implication is that knowledge of the Son must be revealed by the Father. In the following discussion we shall see that Matthew demonstrates this point in Peter's confession that Jesus is the "Christ, the Son of the Living God" (16:16). Then at the transfiguration, Peter and two other disciples see Jesus in his heavenly glory, and they hear the divine voice confirm Jesus' messianic identity.

Imperception as Cognitive Humanity.

In the previous chapter, we saw that Mark's Gospel draws a clear contrast between divine and human estimations of Jesus in the narrative leading up to Peter's confession. Divine beings simply recognize Jesus' messianic identity (cf. Mark 1:24, 34; 3:11; 5:7), but humans do not (cf. Mark 3:21-22; 6:3-4, 14-15). We argued that this contrast reflects an underlying premise that Jesus' messianic identity is a mystery of the divine realm that humans cannot perceive as a result of their cognitive humanity. Thus, in addition to flagging incorrect human identifications of Jesus, Mark emphasizes that the disciples' cognitive humanity prevents them from perceiving the significance of certain miracles that point to Jesus' messianic identity (cf. Mark 4:41; 6:51-52; 8:17-18, 21). The case was made that these displays of the disciples' cognitive humanity functioned as the prelude for what followed in the narrative. Peter's confession then represents the first point in the narrative where a human has correctly perceived Jesus' messianic identity, and it marks the point at

which the disciples transcend the limitations of their cognitive humanity with regard to this matter.

Things are much more complicated in Matthew's Gospel. First, Matthew does not maintain a sharp contrast between divine and human estimations of Jesus. He has omitted three Markan passages which demonstrate that demons recognize Jesus' messianic identity (Mark 1:24, 34; 3:11).⁹⁷ As a result, the narrative does not include a substantial sampling of correct, divine identifications of Jesus that serve as a foil for the incorrect, human identifications of him. Additionally, despite the fact that the narrative includes human identifications of Jesus that fall short,⁹⁸ Matthew hints that some human characters do, in fact, perceive Jesus' messianic identity prior to Peter's confession in 16:16. In the infancy narrative, the angelic revelation to Joseph that Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit, and that Jesus would save the people from their sins, suggests that Joseph and Mary had some insight into his messianic identity (1:20-21).⁹⁹ Both the Magi and Herod understand that Jesus is the Christ (2:1-2, 3-6). Before Peter's confession, two blind men attribute to Jesus the messianic title, "Son of David" (9:27), and the crowds also contemplate this identification of him (12:23).¹⁰⁰ Moreover, in 12:15-16, Jesus warns *people* not to tell who he is—suggesting that they indeed know his identity—whereas Mark portrays Jesus as

97. Though Matthew has retained Mark 5:7 (cf. Matt 8:29), and perhaps the temptation sequence makes this point, since the devil twice refers to him as the "Son of God" (4:3, 6).

98. The scribes and Pharisees maintain that he is an agent of Beelzeboul (9:34; 10:25; 12:24); Herod concludes the he is John the Baptist in resurrected form (14:1-2); those in Jesus' hometown take offense at him, giving him no prophetic honor (13:55-57). Interestingly, Matthew indicates that John the Baptist himself had doubts about whether Jesus is the Messiah (11:2-3).

99. This is probably supported by the fact that Matthew (and Luke) has omitted Mark 3:21, where Jesus' family concludes that he is out of his mind. In *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 11:9-19, Joseph and Mary indeed perceive that, in the infant Jesus, "the LORD had come in his lot," but Israel, who was roused by adversary, "did not know who he was."

100. However, although Matthew viewed "son of David" as a legitimate designation for Jesus (cf. 1:1, 17), he probably also viewed it as an incomplete or insufficient estimation of Jesus' messianic identity. Thus, when the Pharisees claim that the Christ is "the son of David," Jesus teaches that this conclusion misses the exegetical hints in Ps 110:1 which point towards something more (cf. 22:41-46). On the messianic significance of this title, see the comments and notes in France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 366–67.

disallowing *demons* to disclose this information (cf. Mark 3:11-12).¹⁰¹ Finally, 11:25-27 indicates that all who had responded to Jesus' preaching with repentance and faith have received revelation from the Father concerning Jesus' significance, which should probably be equated with perception of his messianic identity, to some degree.

Second, leading up to Peter's confession, Matthew's narrative does not highlight the disciples' cognitive humanity like Mark's narrative does. After Jesus has rebuked the wind and the waves, Matthew still reports that the disciples say, "what kind of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him" (8:27). Yet, when Jesus later walks on the water to them, Matthew omits Mark's comment that the disciples "were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened" (Mark 6:51-52). Instead, he portrays the disciples as perceiving Jesus' messianic identity after the incident: "Those in the boat worshipped him saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God'" (14:33). Yet again, when Jesus warns the disciples against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees, Matthew omits Jesus' question about whether the disciples, like the crowds, had hardened hearts, and whether they had eyes that failed to see and ears that failed to hear (cf. Mark 8:17-18; 4:12). His version of the episode also concludes differently than Mark's; Mark concludes this episode with Jesus asking whether the disciples still do not understand, which suggests that they had failed to make a connection, whatever it is, between Jesus' miraculous feedings and his identity (Mark 8:21). However, although Matthew includes Jesus' surprise at their lack of understanding (16:9, 11), the episode concludes with Matthew's comment that the disciples came to understand the significance of Jesus' enigmatic reference to yeast (16:12). Thus, the main point of the episode in Matthew's narrative is essentially different than in Mark's.

101. However, Matthew does not clarify that these people know Jesus' messianic identity, which may mean that, in light of the Pharisees' plot to kill him (cf. 12:14), he warns them only to conceal his identity as Jesus of Nazareth for the sake of protection.

For these reasons, Matthew's narrative does not build up to Peter's confession in the same way that Mark's does. Therefore, in Matthew's Gospel, Peter's confession does not seem to represent the first time that cognitive humanity has been transcended with regard to Jesus' messianic identity, as in Mark's.

Peter's Confession.

Peter's confession in Matt 16:16 does not relate to the preceding narrative in precisely the same way as it did in Mark's Gospel. Nevertheless, the episode functions similarly, definitively highlighting that Peter and the disciples have transcended their cognitive humanity with regard to the matter of Jesus' messianic identity, though not for the first time (cf. 14:33). That the episode still functions in this way is a direct result of the features that uniquely appear in Matthew's version of it. Although the historical and theological importance of 16:13-20 (esp. vv. 17-19) should not be minimized,¹⁰² the focus and limits of this study require that the following analysis is restricted to an assessment of the ways in which Matthew's portrayal of Peter and the disciples in this episode has been influenced by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers. There are four points to make.

First, although Mark 8:27-30 clearly contrasts Peter's confession of Jesus' identity with the opinions of others, Matthew emphasizes that this is, in fact, a contrast between divine revelation and cognitive humanity. He does so by way of Jesus' response to Peter in 16:17, which explicitly attributes Peter's confession of Jesus' identity to divine revelation from the Father. Matthew, like Mark, begins the episode with Jesus asking a question about the people's identifications of him: τίνα λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου; (v. 13).¹⁰³ To this the disciples

102. "Few verses in the New Testament have caused such disagreement with respect to their interpretation, especially since the Reformation; at the same time, few have been so important within history as these" (Hengel, *Saint Peter*, 2-3).

103. Luz observes that the title "Son of Man" here, unique to Matthew, reinforces a contrast between what outsiders know about the Son of Man, and what the disciples know (Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 360). Regarding the significance of the title in 16:13, see also the comments of France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 614-15.

reply, οἱ μὲν Ἰωάννην τὸν βαπτιστήν, ἄλλοι δὲ Ἡλίαν, ἕτεροι δὲ Ἰερεμίαν ἢ ἓνα τῶν προφητῶν (v. 14), citing some of the opinions that feature in the preceding and following narrative.¹⁰⁴ Jesus then asks a second question: ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι; (v. 15). Although Jesus directs both questions to the group of disciples, Peter alone answers, σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος (v. 16).¹⁰⁵ Jesus' response then explicitly states what Mark, by way of his contrast between divine and human estimations of Jesus, had implied about the source of Peter's confession: μακάριος εἶ, Σίμων Βαριωνᾶ, ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα οὐκ ἀπεκάλυψέν σοι ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς (v. 17). Peter's ability to perceive and confess Jesus' messianic identity is based on his reception of revelation directly from the Father.¹⁰⁶ Thus, not only does the sequence of Jesus' two questions and their respective answers contrast Peter's confession of Jesus' identity with the opinions of other people, but Matthew's inclusion of Jesus' statement in v. 17 also plainly contrasts the source of each identification of him. On the one hand, others hold human views of Jesus' identity.¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, Peter holds a correct perception of Jesus' messianic identity, as a result of divine revelation. Jesus' response demonstrates that Peter's confession stands over-against the mere human estimations of his identity held by others.¹⁰⁸

104. Cf. 14:2; 21:11, 46.

105. Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 71; Michael J. Wilkins, "Peter's Declaration Concerning Jesus' Identity in Caesarea Philippi," in *Key Events in the Life of the Historical Jesus: A Collaborative Exploration of Context and Coherence* (ed. Darrell L. Bock and Robert L. Webb; Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2010), 300, understand Peter to function as spokesperson with his answer.

106. "Peter shows himself to be in a unique position as one who receives a revelation from the heavenly Father" (Hengel, *Saint Peter*, 14–15). In light of the fact that other passages in Matthew portray a wider group of disciples as receiving revelation of some sort, Hengel's statement requires some qualification.

107. The wording of Jesus' question (following the wording of Mark 8:27), which asks who οἱ ἄνθρωποι hold him to be, not who the crowds hold him to be (as in Luke 9:18), supports Matthew's contrast between divine revelation and cognitive humanity.

108. Nickelsburg observes that the location of Peter's revelation in Caesarea Philippi matches the location associated with Enoch's and Levi's revelations (cf. *1 En.* 13:7; *T. Levi* 2:3), and that this was a traditional place where one might receive revelation. Most interesting is his observation that the revelation received there entailed a polemic against Jerusalem (Nickelsburg, "Enoch, Levi, Peter," esp. 592–600).

Second, Jesus' blessing of Peter in v. 17 echoes the exclusionary statement of 11:25-27. In 11:25, Jesus praises the Father for concealing ταῦτα (i.e., esp. Jesus' significance) from some, but revealing them to others, and he states in 11:27 that no one knows the Son except the Father. Since Jesus then specifies in 16:17 that Peter's estimation of him as the "Christ, Son of the living God" is a result of revelation from the Father, this probably indicates that, within the context of Matthew's narrative, 16:16-17 concretely depicts what Jesus more generally speaks of in 11:25-27.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, Jesus' exclusionary statement in 11:25 explicitly contrasts those who received revelation from the Father with those who did not. Even though 16:17 is not technically an exclusionary statement, the contrast between Peter and οἱ ἄνθρωποι in vv. 13-17 functions similarly, attributing revelation to one, while implying that revelation has been withheld from others. That Peter had indeed received exclusive revelation from the Father—which the larger group of disciples participates in to some degree¹¹⁰—is confirmed by the transmission injunctions that Jesus places upon Peter's revelatory insight at the conclusion of the episode: τότε διεστείλατο τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ εἰπωσιν ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός (v. 20). As apocalyptic seers conceal their revelations from others, so do these dissemination details indicate that the disciples conceal Peter's revelatory insight concerning Jesus' messianic identity.¹¹¹

Third, the polemical significance of Jesus' statement in v. 17, ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα οὐκ ἀπεκάλυψέν σοι, has been underappreciated. Scholars sometimes note its similarity to Paul's statement that he did not immediately consult "flesh and blood" when receiving revelation of the Son from the Father: Ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν [ὁ θεός]...ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς

109. If so, this would seem to confirm the point about νήπιοι in 11:25 referring especially to the disciples.

110. Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 187–89.

111. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 623, understand the revelation of Jesus' identity to Peter as the revelation of an eschatological secret.

ἔθνεσιν, εὐθέως οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι (Gal 1:15-16).¹¹² Paul's statement here reiterates what he had previously said about the divine origin of his gospel: Γνωρίζω γὰρ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν κατὰ ἄνθρωπον· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον αὐτὸ οὔτε ἐδιδάχθην ἀλλὰ δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal 1:11-12). In each of these statements, Paul does not merely claim to have received the gospel by revelation; he explicitly disavows that what he preaches is in any way dependent for its authority on other humans.¹¹³ Of course, given the occasion of the epistle, this is of central importance for defending his authority and credibility with respect to that of Peter or James. Likewise, Jesus' statement in Matt 16:17 does not merely attribute Peter's confession to revelation from the Father, but it also explicitly disavows that Peter's revelation was in any way dependent upon humanity.¹¹⁴ The reason for this is likely related to Matthew's polemic against the scribes and Pharisees, and his portrayal of Peter and the disciples as God's alternatively appointed custodians of the kingdom (cf. 21:33-45). In other words, like Paul's claims regarding his gospel in Gal 1:11-12, 15-16, Jesus' statement in 16:17 attributes divine revelation to Peter in such a way as to assert his authority as independent from all other humans,¹¹⁵ including such figures

112. E.g., Kähler, "Zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte von Matth. xvi. 17–19," 38; Hengel, *Saint Peter*, 15–16; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 623. Gérard Claudel, *La Confession De Pierre: Trajectoire d'une Péricope Évangélique* (Ebib 10; Paris: J. Gabalda, 1988), 327, rightly rejects the idea of dependency between Matt 16:17 and Gal 1:16, holding instead that "Matthieu et Paul s'inspirent de la phraséologie traditionnelle du judaïsme de leur temps."

113. Though he does acknowledge that what he preached was later affirmed by Peter and James (Gal 1:18-19).

114. Cf. Kenneth L. Carroll, "Thou Art Peter," *NovT* 6 (1963): 276, who refers to 16:17-19 as a "Declaration of Independence," though he thinks it is designed to assert independence from James and Jerusalem.

115. However, the other disciples are likely aligned with Peter in this independent authority. Hengel argues that the Matthean Peter stands as "*the only authoritative disciple figure*, with all of the other disciples disappearing completely behind him, generally being dealt with only as a collective group and appearing as walk-ons" (Hengel, *Saint Peter*, 25, italics original). Yet this overlooks that the groups of disciples to which Peter belongs are portrayed elsewhere as exclusive recipients of revelation, in distinction from Judaism's authoritative figures (e.g., 11:25-27; 13:10-52), and that the disciples share in Peter's custodianship of the mystery of Jesus' messianic identity (16:20).

as the scribes and Pharisees, who presumed to be the eschatological “wise and understanding” (cf. 11:25). Peter’s credibility in identifying Jesus as the Messiah therefore stands on its own, despite whether other authority figures had pejoratively labeled him as a *νήπιος*.¹¹⁶ Like apocalyptic seers in the apocalypses, Peter directly receives revelation—it is not mediated to him through a chain of transmission as a deposit of esoteric insight or tradition stemming from another human.¹¹⁷

Fourth, the previous point about the significance of Jesus’ statement in v. 17 finds confirmation in vv. 18-19, where Jesus confers the keys of the kingdom, and the authority to bind and loose, to Peter: δώσω σοι τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν δήσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδεμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν λύσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται λελυμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. What is at stake here is Peter’s authority and credibility, independent of the scribes and Pharisees, to demarcate those who constitute the messianic community, gathered in the last days to live in view of the nearness of the kingdom of heaven, vigilantly anticipating its consummated arrival.¹¹⁸ In other words, Jesus grants earthly authority to assemble and administrate

116. The actual construction of Peter’s confession may also engage in Matthew’s polemic against the Pharisees. Peter does not simply confess that Jesus is the Christ, but he affirms Jesus’ divine Sonship as well. The importance of this for Matthew is related to the Pharisees’ apparent emphasis of the Messiah’s Davidic sonship, to the neglect of his divine Sonship. When Jesus poses a question to the Pharisees about whose son the Christ is, their identification of him merely as “the son of David” is shown to miss the exegetical hints of Ps 110:1.

117. Kähler argues that Jesus’ blessing of Peter conforms to the scheme of “Investitur des Offenbarungstradenten” (Kähler, “Zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte von Matth. xvi. 17–19,” 44), which he also finds in, e.g., 4 *Ezra* 10:57. Based on a comparison between these and other examples, Kähler concludes that 16:17-19 attributes to Peter a salvation-historical function as “Garant der treuen Überlieferung der Offenbarung,” and that Christ recognizes Peter as “legitimer Offenbarungszeuge” (Ibid., 56). However, Luz correctly observes the formal differences between 16:17-19 and the other examples cited by Kähler, which leaves him unconvinced (Ulrich Luz, “Das Primatwort Matthäus 16:17–19 aus wirkungsgeschichtlicher Sicht,” *NTS* 37, no. 3 [1991]: 423; cf. also the points of criticism noted by Kingsbury, “Figure of Peter,” 75 n. 26). Despite the formal differences of the parallels cited by Kähler, his basic point may be correct that 16:17-19 functions similarly to his other examples of this scheme, and impacts the Matthean Peter similarly.

118. Theories about the background and significance of this special material abound (e.g., Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung*, 60–63; Bornkamm, “Authority”; Bruce T. Dahlberg, “The Typological Use of Jeremiah 1:4–19 in Matthew 16:13–23,” *JBL* 94, no. 1 [March 1975]: 73–80; Nickelsburg, “Enoch, Levi, Peter,” 592–600; Richard H. Hiers, “Binding’ and ‘Loosing’: The Matthean Authorizations,” *JBL* 104/2 [1985]: 233–50; Joel Marcus, “The Gates of Hades and the Keys of the Kingdom [Matt 16:18–19],” *CBQ* 50 [1998]: 443–55; Davies and Allison,

the messianic community to Peter, over-against the authority of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus' words here to Peter do not simply construct Peter's status or significance in a vacuum; they engage in Matthew's polemic against the scribes and Pharisees by removing their status as those who administrate and determine the earthly boundaries of the kingdom of heaven. That the scribes and Pharisees occupied this role is evident in Jesus' denunciation of them: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in the face of people. You yourselves do not enter, neither do you permit those who are entering to enter" (23:13). Thus, the polemical point of 16:17-19 seems to be that Peter, at least, replaces the scribes and Pharisees as the divinely appointed administrator of the earthly community of the kingdom of heaven. In this way, the messianic, eschatological community would stand upon his foundational role. We shall delay until ch. 7 an extended discussion of the uniqueness for Peter that is envisaged in 16:13-20. For now it is sufficient to note how tightly Matthew focuses on Peter here, joining his confession to an explanation of his name, Πέτρος.

Peter's confession of Jesus' messianic identity, which also affirms his divine Sonship, reinforces the link between this episode and Jesus' transfiguration, where the divine voice announces of Jesus, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα (17:5).

The Transfiguration.

We have observed that Mark's portrayal of Peter and the disciples was influenced by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers most clearly in the transfiguration episode. The same can probably be said with reference to Matthew's Gospel.¹¹⁹

Matthew, 634–39). Yet it seems that all would agree with Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 429, who says, "[Peter] clearly acts on sufficient delegated authority."

119. See the discussion of parallels in Terence L. Donaldson, *Jesus on the Mountain: A Study in Matthean Theology* (JSNTSup 8; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 141–42.

Matthew has followed Mark's listing of Peter, James, and John as the exclusive participants in this revelatory episode. This diverges from 24:3, where he includes the whole group of disciples, whereas Mark listed the more restricted group of four. Matthew also retains Mark's use of narrative isolation, although the redundancy of Mark's emphatic phrase, *κατ' ἰδίαν μόνους* (Mark 9:2), has been removed, reading more simply, *κατ' ἰδίαν* (17:1).¹²⁰ Nevertheless, none of the privacy or exclusivity of the episode is lost with this change. Alone on the mountain with Jesus,¹²¹ these three disciples receive an exclusive revelation of his heavenly glory as the coming Son of Man (cf. 16:28), and they hear the voice of God confirm Jesus' divine Sonship, which also confirms Peter's confession. Matthew retains the dissemination details found in his source, and the otherworldly vision concludes with a command that the disciples conceal their exclusive insight until after Jesus' resurrection (17:9).¹²²

Matthean redaction brings the episode more closely into conformity with standard presentations of epiphanic visions.¹²³ Hence, Jesus refers to the episode as "the vision," *τὸ ὄραμα* (v. 9), rather than as "what you have seen," *ἃ εἶδον*, as in Mark 9:2.¹²⁴ The description of the transfigured Jesus focuses on the radiance of his face in addition to that of his clothing: *καὶ ἔλαμψεν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος, τὰ δὲ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο λευκὰ ὡς τὸ φῶς* (17:2). Although this is not a different point than what is made by Mark's description of only the otherworldly brilliance of Jesus' clothes, epiphanic visions more normally emphasize the luminance of the

120. Cf. 14:12, 23; 17:19; 20:17; 24:3.

121. K. C. Hanson, "Transformed on the Mountain: Ritual Analysis and the Gospel of Matthew," *Semeia* 67 (1994): 147–70, suggests that the isolation of the disciples with Jesus on the mountain signals that the disciples are undergoing ritual transformations.

122. Cf. Edith M. Humphrey, *And I Turned to See the Voice: The Rhetoric of Vision in the New Testament* (Studies in Theological Interpretation; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 137. Donaldson, *Jesus on the Mountain*, 137, notes the connection of the element of secrecy with the "apocalyptic flavour of the narrative."

123. *Ibid.*, 149.

124. Cf. esp. Dan 7:13; cf. also Dan 2:19; 7:1, 7, 15; 8:2, 13, 15, 17, 26, 27; 10:1.

otherworldly being himself in the manner that Matthew has.¹²⁵ Matthew also introduces each progression in the vision with the interjection, ἰδοὺ (preceding: the appearance of Moses and Elijah [v. 3]; the enveloping cloud [v. 5a]; the voice of God [v. 5b]), thus demonstrating his awareness that this is a standard feature of visionary accounts.¹²⁶ Additionally, Peter does not address Jesus as ῥαββί (cf. Mark 9:5), but as ‘Lord’, κύριε (v. 4). This is an appropriate way to address any superior,¹²⁷ or even God, but it is a standard way that an apocalyptic seer addresses an otherworldly being during a revelatory episode.¹²⁸ Furthermore, Matthew mentions that the disciples raise their eyes, ἐπάραντες δὲ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν (v. 8), at the conclusion of the vision, which conforms Mark’s phrase, καὶ ἐξάπινα περιβλεψάμενοι (Mark 9:8), to the more standard language of visionary accounts.¹²⁹

Matthew’s redaction towards standard presentations of epiphanic visions is also detected in his presentation of the disciples’ humanity.¹³⁰ Even though Mark mentions the disciples’ fear during the transfiguration, Matthew vividly portrays them as exhibiting the standard fearful response of apocalyptic seers.¹³¹ Thus, when

125. Cf. Ezek 8:2; Dan 10:6; Rev 1:13-16; *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:11-12; *Apoc. Ab.* 11:1-3; 2 *En.* 1:3-5; cf. also 4 *Ezra* 10:25; *Lad. Jac.* 3:1-5; Rev 19:11-16; Matt 28:2-3; Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus*, 80–84.

126. Cf. e.g., Amos 7:1, 4, 7, 8; 8:1; Ezek 1:4, 15, 25; 2:9; 3:23; 8:2; Zech 1:8; 2:1, 5, 7; 4:2; 5:1, 7, 9; 6:1; Dan 7:2, 5, 8, 13, 19; 8:5, 15; 9:21; 10:5, 10, 16; 12:5; 1 *En.* 12:3; 13:8; 14:8, 15; *T. Levi* 2:6; 2 *Bar.* 13:1; 3 *Bar.* 1:3; 6:2; 11:5; 12:1; *T. Ab.* [A] 3:5; 12:16; 16:8. Cf. Wilson, “Apocalypticism,” 117–18; Humphrey, *And I Turned to See the Voice*, 140.

127. This is the sense of its use in Matt 8:2, 6, 8, 21; 9:28; 13:27; 15:22, 25, 27; 16:22; 17:15; 18:21; 20:30, 31, 33; 21:30; 25:11, 20, 22, 24; 26:22; 27:30; it is used more ambiguously with reference to Jesus in 7:21, 22; 8:25; 14:28, 30; 25:37, 44; it is used of God in 11:25.

128. E.g., Zech 1:9; 2:2; 4:4, 5, 13; 6:4; Dan 10:16; v. 17 (Th); 12:8; *T. Levi* 5:5; 4 *Ezra* 4:3, 5; 5:33-34; 7:3; *Apoc. Sedr.* 2:2; 3 *Bar.* 3:4 [G]; 5:1; *Herm.* 18:9; passim. Although Jesus teaches in Matt 23:7-8 that his disciples are not to take the title ῥαββί, Matthew does not indicate that this would be an inappropriate title for Jesus (cf. 26:25, 49). Thus, it seems that his reason for changing it to κύριε in 17:4 is to standardize Peter’s address of Jesus along the normal lines of an apocalyptic seer addressing an otherworldly being.

129. Cf. esp. Dan 8:3 (Th); 10:5; cf. also Zech 2:1, 5; 5:1, 5, 9; 6:1; Ezek 8:5.

130. Humphrey, *And I Turned to See the Voice*, 140.

131. Cf. K. C. Hanson, “Transformed on the Mountain,” 165, who argues that the disciples’ reaction is “more than simply a literary motif, this is the appropriate *ritual action and posture*” (italics original). The significance of this, according to Hanson, is that the disciples progress in their status as disciples.

they hear God's voice, the disciples fall on their faces and they are exceedingly fearful: καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ μαθηταὶ ἔπεσαν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα (v. 6). In the apocalypses, such displays of the seer's emotional and physical humanity are normally followed by reassuring words and a restorative touch from a divine being or mediator of revelation.¹³² Hence, Matthew reports that Jesus touches the disciples and tells them to stand and not fear: καὶ προσῆλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἀψάμενος αὐτῶν εἶπεν· ἐγέρθητε καὶ μὴ φοβεῖσθε (v. 7).¹³³

In contrast with the disciples' escalated emotional and physical humanity, their cognitive humanity is considerably less prominent in Matthew's version of the episode than in Mark's. Matthew indeed retains Peter's proposal to construct three tents for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah,¹³⁴ which displays his cognitive humanity to some degree.¹³⁵ However, Matthew removes Mark's reference to Peter's confusion following this suggestion: οὐ γὰρ ᾔδει τί ἀποκριθῆ, ἐκφοβοὶ γὰρ ἐγένοντο (Mark 9:6). Moreover, when Jesus instructs them about their secondary disclosure of the vision, Matthew has removed Mark's comment that the disciples discussed what he meant by "the resurrection from the dead" (Mark 9:10). Matthew has retained the disciples' question about why the scribes say that Elijah must come first, which matches the sort of exegetical questions that apocalyptic seers sometimes pose

132. E.g., Dan 8:17-18; 10:8-12, 15-19; *1 En.* 14:13-14, 24-15:1; 60:3-4; 71:2-3; *2 En.* 1:7-8 [J]; 20:1-2; 21:2-3; 22:4-6; *4 Ezra* 5:14-15; 10:30; *Apoc. Ab.* 10:2-6; Rev 1:17; *Apoc. Zeph.* B:3-4 [Sahidic frag.]. Cf. Wilson, "Apocalypticism," 125-27; Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus*, 216-18.

133. Cf. 28:2-5, 9-10. Penner overlooks that Jesus' restorative touch and reassuring words are standard elements of epiphany scenes, and so overemphasizes that they demonstrate "compassion and gentleness without condemnation" (James A. Penner, "Revelation and Discipleship in Matthew's Transfiguration Account," *BSac* 152 [1995]: 208-9).

134. Heil, *The Transfiguration of Jesus*, 207, understands Peter to function as a spokesman here.

135. Cf. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 43; Jeannine K. Brown, *Disciples*, 61. Bubar's admitted polemic against the institutional church causes him to grossly misconstrue Peter's expression of cognitive humanity: "Peter babbles unintelligibly when he attempts to speak" (Bubar, "One Stone," 148). Additionally, it is unlikely that Peter's suggestion represents a serious misunderstanding of Jesus' nature, as Penner concludes (cf. Penner, "Revelation and Discipleship," 209).

regarding the manner in which prophecy will be fulfilled.¹³⁶ Whereas Mark concludes the episode with Jesus' answer (Mark 9:12-13), Matthew concludes with a statement that underscores the disciples' understanding: τότε συνῆκαν οἱ μαθηταὶ ὅτι περὶ Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς (17:13). As we noted in the discussion of Matt 13:52, Matthew has emphasized that Jesus' explanation enables the disciples to overcome their cognitive humanity, thereby underscoring their insight into the mysteries that have been revealed. In the context of Matthew's narrative, this insight granted to them regarding John the Baptist once again recalls the exclusionary statement of 11:25-27, since the significance of John as the Elijah prophesied in Mal 3:1 (and also Isa 40:3; cf. Matt 3:3) was missed by "this generation," precisely because the Father had hidden "these things" from the "wise and understanding."¹³⁷ Therefore, we see that the insight granted to the disciples through Jesus' inspired interpretation of prophecy with reference to John feeds into the contrast between them, who possess understanding, and the scribes and Pharisees, who do not.

Once again, Peter is especially prominent in the transfiguration, individually proposing to build three tents.¹³⁸ His proposal individually expresses cognitive humanity during the revelatory episode, though the three disciples together experience the debilitating effects of the revelation upon their emotional and physical humanity, each also receiving reassuring words and a restorative touch from Jesus, who is portrayed as a divine mediator of revelation in this respect. Perhaps the individual focus on Peter, and the unique participation of these three disciples in this revelatory episode, suggest that Matthew, following Mark, attributed a unique kind of revelation to these three disciples exclusively, wherein they foresee first-hand the

136. In referring to the matter of Elijah as an exegetical question, it is important to recognize that the Mishnah refers to Elijah's coming as "Halakha from Sinai to Moses" (*m. 'Ed. 8:7*).

137. J. A. T. Robinson, "Elijah, John and Jesus: An Essay in Detection," *NTS* 4 (1958): 263–81, has highlighted the difficulty with which the identification of Elijah was made with reference to John and Jesus.

138. Matthew has further individualized his speech in 17:4 by changing the first-person plural verb ποιήσωμεν from Mark 9:5 to a first-person singular form, ποιήσω.

eschatological coming of the Son of Man. Only after the resurrection do they disclose the matter to the other members of the Twelve. Their exclusive participation in this episode is likely related to their individual avowals of loyalty to Jesus later in the narrative (cf. 20:22; 26:35).

Jesus' Messianic Mode

Peter's confession reiterates the point of 11:25-27, that revelation from the Father has enabled the disciples to transcend their cognitive humanity with regard to Jesus' messianic identity. The transfiguration then confirms this point, since Peter, James, and John see Jesus in his heavenly glory as the coming Son of Man, and they hear God's voice announcing Jesus' divine Sonship. However, Matthew, like Mark, shows that Peter's cognitive humanity persists in part, since he initially rejects the idea that Jesus will suffer. Yet, Jesus insists in three installments of teaching that the mode of his messiahship requires suffering as the rejected Son of Man. Matthew portrays the disciples as fully understanding each of the three installments of teaching, which departs significantly from their portrayal in Mark.

The Fate of the Son of Man in Plain Teaching.

Following Peter's confession, Matthew closely reproduces the exchange where Peter individually attempts to correct Jesus' conclusion about his own suffering.¹³⁹ As in Mark's Gospel, this constitutes a display of Peter's cognitive humanity regarding the mode of Jesus' messiahship,¹⁴⁰ as Jesus' rebuke clarifies:

ὑπαγε ὀπίσω μου, σατανᾶ· σκάνδαλον εἶ ἐμοῦ, ὅτι οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων (16:23).¹⁴¹ God's design for the mode of Jesus' messiahship is

139. Matthew further individualizes Peter by removing Mark's note that Jesus' rebuke occurred with a glance towards the group of disciples (Mark 8:33).

140. Cf. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 96.

141. As was noted in the discussion of the parallel passage of Mark 8:33, it is difficult to determine the degree to which Jesus' rebuke of Peter as σατανᾶς should be viewed as a rebuke for reflecting a demonic, or Satanic point of view about Jesus' messianic mode. In support of translating σατανᾶς in Matt 16:23 as 'adversary', the remainder of the verse elaborates that Peter's thoughts are τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, 'the things of humans' or 'human things', which are directly contrasted with τὰ

different than Peter's human conception of it.¹⁴² It is perhaps noteworthy that Matthew maintains a private setting for Jesus' teaching about the necessity of suffering for discipleship, which was not the case in the Markan parallel. Thus, whereas Mark says that Jesus called the crowd to hear his teaching (Mark 8:34), Matthew says only that Jesus spoke to his disciples (16:24). This accords with the privacy of Jesus' further installments of teaching about the necessity of suffering.

Additional Plain Teaching.

The point that the Son of Man must suffer is mentioned again to Peter, James, and John during the transfiguration episode, while they are alone with Jesus (17:12). We have already noted that Matthew has removed Mark's notice that the disciples were confused about Jesus' reference to the resurrection of the Son of Man (cf. 17:9 to Mark 9:10). The significance of this is related to his redaction of the second installment of Jesus' teaching about his fate as the Son of Man in 17:22-23. Here, Matthew has again omitted Mark's reference to the disciples' cognitive humanity: οἱ δὲ ἡγνόουν τὸ ῥῆμα, καὶ ἐφοβοῦντο αὐτὸν ἐπερωτῆσαι (Mark 9:32). Instead, he portrays them as understanding what Jesus meant, highlighting their excessive sorrow instead: καὶ ἐλυπήθησαν σφόδρα (17:23). Then in the third installment (20:17-19), Matthew inserts the phrase, κατ' ἰδίαν, to highlight the privacy of Jesus' discussion about his fate with the disciples. As there was no mention of the disciples'

τοῦ θεοῦ, 'the things of God' or 'divine things'. Therefore, the main point of Jesus' rebuke of Peter seems to center on a contrast between a human point of view—not a demonic or Satanic point of view—about Jesus' messianic mode, and the divine view of it that Jesus' private teaching is designed to establish within the disciples. As was concluded with reference to Mark 8:33, this is probably the most that can be drawn from Matthew's use of σατανᾶς in 16:23. But because Matthew also uses of this word elsewhere as a proper name for the devil (4:10; 12:26), it is striking that *this term* is retained in 16:23, when it surely could have been avoided. With this term, Matthew may want to imply that Peter's human point of view is ultimately aligned with Satan's opposition to the work of God, but this can only be speculated. Even if this is the case, it should not be overlooked that Jesus explicitly refers to Peter's thoughts as human thoughts, which is why we have classified Peter's rebuke of Jesus as an expression of his cognitive humanity.

142. "This contrast sets up an ideological conflict that plays out in the rest of the narrative between the divine perspective that Jesus consistently illuminates in his teaching and the human (contra-divine) perspective of the disciples" (Jeannine K. Brown, *Disciples*, 60).

cognitive humanity in the Markan version of this third installment, so there is not in Matthew's. Following Jesus' rebuke of Peter, therefore, Matthew's portrayal of the disciples suggests that they have progressed past the limits of their cognitive humanity with regard to Jesus' suffering. Successive disclosures of Jesus' fate recalibrate their human point of view.

Conclusion

The second section of this chapter has argued that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has influenced Matthew's portrayal of Peter and the disciples in connection with Jesus' messianic identity and mode. This influence has come to bear more squarely on Peter as an individual than in the theme of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation.

Although Matthew does not connect Peter's confession with the preceding narrative in precisely the same manner as Mark does, he makes the same point with this episode by including Jesus' response to Peter in 16:17. Jesus' statement explicitly attributes Peter's confession to revelation from the Father, thereby emphasizing that it stands in contrast to the other, merely human estimations of his identity. In view of 11:25-27 and 14:33, this does not seem to be the first point in the narrative that the disciples perceive Jesus' messianic identity. Yet, this is the definitive moment in the Gospel which underscores that they have crossed the barrier of their cognitive humanity with regard to Jesus' messianic identity, which allows Jesus to then qualify his messianic mode. Moreover, Jesus' response asserts that Peter's confession is independently authoritative—since it is divine revelation from the Father, it does not depend on human authentication or tradition from the scribes and Pharisees. Thus, like an apocalyptic seer, Peter has received this confession as direct revelation, not as anything that is indirectly revealed through a chain of transmission or as a deposit of tradition. In this way, Matthew's presentation of

Peter's confession not only recalls the polemical notes of Jesus' exclusionary statement in 11:25-27, but it also has much in common with Paul's defense of his gospel in Gal 1.

The transfiguration confirms the validity of Peter's confession. Matthew's redaction of the episode brings it into close conformity with the epiphanic visions that apocalyptic seers experience during their revelatory episodes. Peter's proposal to construct three tents displays his cognitive humanity, but Matthew much more forcefully emphasizes the emotional and physical humanity of the three disciples. As apocalyptic seers normally do, they fall to the ground in terror. As an otherworldly being would, Jesus supplies reassuring words and a restorative touch. Along with the more minor changes mentioned in our discussion of this passage, these points in particular suggest the direct influence that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers had upon Matthew's portrayal of the disciples.

Similarly to an apocalyptic seer, Peter articulates a view of Jesus' suffering that is profoundly human, standing against God's point of view on the matter. Jesus' rebuke and subsequent teaching enable the disciples to transcend their cognitive humanity with regard to Jesus' messianic mode. That they do is noted in Matthew's omission of Mark's indications that they did not understand him, which Matthew replaces at one point with a note that they were saddened by the news.

Personal Eschatology

We have observed that Matthew has incorporated additional, non-Markan material into some of the passages that were discussed in the preceding. In the section on parables and the mystery of the kingdom (13:10-52), Matthew has included the Parable of the Weeds (13:24-30, 36-43) and the Parable of the Net (13:47-50), which appear to be his special material.¹⁴³ Additionally, Matthew has

143. Though Michael D. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (London: SPK, 1974), 367–76, has argued that these represent Matthean midrash of Mark's Gospel.

concluded the apocalyptic discourse with a judgment scene described in terms of sheep and goats being separated to the right and left of the Son of Man (25:31-46). Again, this is apparently Matthew's special material. In both cases, the special material constitutes part of Jesus' private explanations to the disciples, and so seems to be considered among the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.¹⁴⁴

The addition of this material is significant because it is mainly different than the kind of content that Mark generally portrays Jesus as delivering to the disciples in private settings; the special material that Matthew has inserted includes particular details concerning the fate of the dead, or personal eschatology.¹⁴⁵ Thus, in Jesus' explanations of the Parables of the Weeds and of the Net, the disciples are given clear descriptions of the fates that await the wicked and righteous at the eschatological harvest, when the Son of Man addresses the problem of sin in his kingdom. Likewise, the judgment scene in 25:31-46 provides the specific basis for the separation of the righteous and wicked: their reception and treatment of Jesus as concretely expressed in terms of their reception and treatment of his itinerant followers.¹⁴⁶ It also briefly describes the final abodes that await the righteous and the wicked after the judgment. Matthew's addition of this material in these episodes may be the result of direct influence from the portrayals of apocalyptic seers. The apocalypses often portray their seers as receiving disclosures of details concerning personal eschatology. These disclosures range from terse statements concerning the separation of the righteous from the wicked, and short statements about the fates of

144. To this we might also add 16:27b (cf. Mark 8:38), which Matthew presents as seemingly private speech to the disciples, in contrast with Mark (cf. 16:24 to Mark 8:34).

145. "Personal eschatology concerns the future of individuals beyond death. It was mainly in the apocalypses that Jewish and then Christian understandings of life after death developed: the expectation of judgment and resurrection for all the dead, the two final destinies of eternal life and eternal condemnation, and the 'intermediate state' of the dead between death and the general resurrection" (Bauckham, *Fate of the Dead*, 1). See also the consideration of these passages under the chapter, "The Fate of the Wicked and the Fate of the Righteous in Matthew" in Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, 129-47.

146. Cf. 10:40-42; 19:27-28; Petri Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven* (WUNT 2.101; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 185-86.

each group, to extended descriptions of their final abodes and the punishments or blessings that await each group.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, through his inclusion of this special material, Matthew has brought Mark's portrayal of the disciples more in line with that of apocalyptic seers, showing them to be exclusive recipients of mysteries concerning personal eschatology.¹⁴⁸

The apocalypses also closely connect general details of personal eschatology with the specific information concerning the fate of the seer himself. In other words, as a result of his insight concerning the fate of the wicked and righteous, the seer is granted insight into his own fate. For example, after Daniel hears about the eventual fates of the wicked and righteous upon their resurrection (Dan 12:1-3), he receives confirmation that his own fate includes rest, resurrection in the end of days, and reception of his allotted inheritance (12:13). Isaiah ascends to the seventh heaven and sees the abode of the righteous (*Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 9:7-9). His angelic mediator repeatedly assures him that this will be his own fate when he dies (8:11-15; 11:35). Other seers are told that they will immediately take up residence in the abode of the righteous after receiving and depositing the written record of their revelations. God tells Ezra, "[Y]ou shall be taken up from among men, and henceforth you shall live with my Son and with those who are like you, until the times are ended" (*4 Ezra* 14:9). Similarly, Baruch is told, "For you will surely depart from this world, nevertheless not to death but to be kept unto (the end) of times" (*2 Bar.* 76:2).¹⁴⁹ In the rhetoric of the apocalypses, such disclosures closely connect the seer's fate with

147. Cf. Dan 12:2-3; *1 En.* 100:1-13; 102:1-104:5; 108:11-15; *2 En.* 8:1-10:6; 66:7; *4 Ezra* 7:26-[44], [75]-[101]; 8:46-62; *2 Bar.* 30:1-5; 50:2-51:16; *Apoc. Ab.* 24:1-9; 31:1-8; *T. Ab.* 11:1-14:15[A]; *3 Bar.* 16:4-8; *Mart. Ascen. Isa.* 4:14-18; 8:6-11; 9:7-9; *Apoc. Zeph.* B:1-7; 4:1-10; 6:1-7:9; 8:1-11:6.

148. J. A. T. Robinson, "The 'Parable' of the Sheep and the Goats," *NTS* 2 (1956): 225, acknowledges an element of 'apocalyptic' in 25:31-46, but he prefers to distance it from what is found in apocalypses for reasons that are unconvincing: "[I]t possesses that grandeur of simplicity which removes it *toto coelo* from the lurid and melodramatic scenes of the End which Jewish apocalyptic, like subsequent Christian thought, found it necessary to paint."

149. Cf. *2 Bar.* 13:3; 25:1; 43:1-2; 48:30.

that of the righteous who receive the written record of his revelations. Even though the seer may himself experience a more exalted post-mortem or eschatological fate, his fate is nevertheless bound up with that of all the righteous, and so he functions as a sort of guarantor of their fate. From the point of view of an apocalypse's real audience, the seer experiences beforehand, and currently enjoys, the fate for which they hope in the midst of their circumstances. In this way, the seer, who normally also experiences an analogous situation to theirs, becomes a powerful symbol of encouragement and hope.

It is likely that the insight granted to apocalyptic seers concerning their own fates provides the background to Matt 19:28, which is probably a logion from Q. Matthew has inserted this logion into the larger context of Jesus' teaching concerning the difficulty with which the rich will enter the kingdom of heaven. In the Markan parallel, Peter simply exclaims, ἰδοὺ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν πάντα καὶ ἠκολουθήκαμέν σοι (Mark 10:28). Jesus then responds by promising to all who follow him rewards in the kingdom that exponentially reflect the sacrifices made in the present age (10:29-31). In addition to Peter's exclamation, however, Matthew has also portrayed Peter as asking about the fate that awaits the disciples in the kingdom: τί ἄρα ἔσται ἡμῖν; (19:27).¹⁵⁰ In response to this question, Jesus discloses the eschatological fate and role of the disciples when the Son of Man comes: ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ὑμεῖς οἱ ἀκολουθήσαντές μοι ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ, ὅταν καθίσῃ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ, καθήσεσθε καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐπὶ δώδεκα θρόνους κρίνοντες τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ (19:28). Matthew then resumes what is found in his

150. France is unwarranted in assuming that Matthew portrays Peter in a negative light here: "Peter's words sound both smug (we, unlike that young man, have done what you asked) and mercenary (God owes us)" (France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 741); Kingsbury unnecessarily refers to Peter's question about the disciples' fate as "anxious words" (Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 70). On the other hand, Barton's analysis is correct that Peter's question is "...an understandable question in view of the promise of Jesus earlier to the young man that, if he sells his possessions and gives to the poor, he will have 'treasure in heaven'..." (Stephen C. Barton, *Discipleship and Family Ties in Mark and Matthew* [SNTSMS; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994], 206).

Markan source, and Jesus concludes his answer to Peter with a statement about the rewards that await all who have followed him (19:29).

Matthew's addition of Peter's question and Jesus' answer in 19:27b-28 is significant. It explicitly aligns the disciples' eschatological fate and functions with those of Jesus.¹⁵¹ Moreover, it closely links the disciples' eschatological fate with the rewards and reversal of circumstances awaiting all who have left their families and possessions out of service to Jesus. In this way, 19:27b-28 probably serves the function of establishing the disciples as guarantors of the fate awaiting the Matthean community, who follow Jesus in a similar manner to the Twelve (v. 29). The Matthean community could face the pressures of itinerant ministry and the threat of persecution with the assurance that Jesus had granted to the Twelve, and the assurance that the Twelve, in association with the Son of Man, would be the agents through whom God would eschatologically judge the resurrected tribes of Israel.

This status of Peter and the disciples as guarantors of the fate awaiting the Matthean community may also stand behind part of Jesus' response to Peter's confession: *καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ σοὶ λέγω ὅτι σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ πύλαι ᾗδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς* (16:18). This is, of course, one of the notoriously difficult passages in the NT. It is beyond the scope of this study to handle each of the views that have been proposed regarding its meaning and significance.¹⁵² However, in our estimation, Cullmann's analysis is correct that Jesus' statement, *πύλαι ᾗδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς*, announces the inability of

151. In the larger context of the narrative, 19:27-28 connects with the judgment scene of 25:31-46, since both envisage a time when the Son of Man comes and sits upon the throne of his glory in order to judge: *ὅταν καθίσῃ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ* (19:28); *Ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ... τότε καθίσει ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ* (25:31). It also links up with the request of the Zebedee-brothers' mother regarding the placement of her sons in the eschatological arrangement (cf. 20:20-28).

152. See the helpful surveys of Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 630–32; Jack P Lewis, "The Gates of Hell Shall Not Prevail Against It' (Matt 16:18): A Study of the History of Interpretation," *JETS* 38/3 (1995): 349–67.

Hades to contain the church at the resurrection.¹⁵³ If this is the case, then 16:18 seems to be another place where Peter is especially prominent in association with insight concerning the fate of Jesus' followers. Peter is the rock on which the church is built, and Jesus' statement to him in 16:18 portrays him as the guarantor of the fate of the righteous dead—that the gates of Hades will not prevail against the church built upon him.¹⁵⁴ Although Matthew seems to envisage a resurrection of both the wicked and the righteous, the implication is that the resurrection of the church will have the end of eternal life. The larger implication of this is that those among Matthew's community who adhere to the revelation associated with Peter and the disciples (concerning the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and Jesus' messianic identity and mode), and the halakah stemming from them, receive assurance of their collective participation in the resurrection of the dead along with Peter and the disciples. In following the apostles who follow Jesus, Matthew's community is promised resurrection unto a judgment carried out by the apostles, who judge with Jesus.

In summary, Matthew's special material builds the portrayal of the disciples as the exclusive recipients of insight concerning personal eschatology. That this is his special material suggests the possibility that it represents a line of direct influence from the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers, who are granted similar insight. Additionally, Matthew portrays Peter as being particularly interested in the disciples' fate (19:27b). It is difficult to determine whether this merely reflects Peter's role as spokesman, or whether he functions as spokesman here as the result of Matthew's desire to associate him especially closely with the fate awaiting the Twelve and other followers of Jesus. The latter option appears to be more likely in view of 16:18.

153. Cullmann, *Peter*, 203. On the "gates of Hades" as the confines of the realm of the dead, cf. Isa 38:10; Wis 16:13 (includes a possible allusion to resurrection); cf. also Sir 48:5, which refers to the resurrection of a corpse from Hades.

154. Cf. *Odes Sol.* 22, which closely links resurrection with a foundation rock, upon which the kingdom is built.

There—once again in Matthew’s special material—Peter is closely associated with the promise of resurrection for the church that is built upon him. The church’s fate is thus closely bound up with Peter’s (and the disciples’) fate. Jesus’ disclosures in response to Peter’s question (19:27b) and Peter’s answer (16:16) guarantee their fate.

Conclusions

This chapter has determined that Matthew was influenced by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers both indirectly and directly, though the two means of influence are often commingled in individual passages. As was the case with Mark, this influence is detected in connection with Jesus’ enigmatic proclamation, and Jesus’ messianic identity and mode.

1. One avenue of indirect influence came through Matthew’s appropriation of Q. Most significantly, Matthew has incorporated an exclusionary statement from Q into his narrative at 11:25-27. In contrast to Mark, who uses the section on parables (Mark 4:1-34) to establish the disciples as the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, Matthew establishes this status for the disciples in 11:25-27. This Q-source exclusionary statement stands within Matthew’s narrative as Jesus’ response to the fact that many, particularly the scribes and Pharisees, had failed to discern the significance of John and Jesus as God’s agents in affiliation with the kingdom of heaven. This lapse in their discernment was bound up with the larger problem of Israel’s unrepentance in the face of what John, Jesus, and the Twelve preached about the kingdom. Additionally, 11:25-27 was a direct response to the accusation promulgated by the Pharisees, that both John and Jesus (and Twelve by implication) were agents of Beelzeboul (9:34; 10:25; 11:18; 12:24). The exclusionary statement therefore establishes that the “wise and understanding” have been divinely excluded from revelation, while God has indeed revealed “these things” to figurative “children.”

It was argued that these terms likely represent the terminology used by the scribes and Pharisees with reference to their own presumed status, on the one hand, and to pejoratively refer to the alternative leadership of the disciples, who were commissioned by Jesus, on the other. Within the narrative world of Matthew's Gospel, the exclusionary statement of 11:25-27 functions like the exclusionary statements in the apocalypses, specifically identifying the human figure(s) to whom revelation has been revealed. Beyond this narrative world, it is probable that the scribes and Pharisees of Matthew's historical context employed these same terms with reference to themselves and to Matthew's community, respectively. Thus, the Q-source exclusionary statement functions as a polemical assertion that the Matthean community, or at least its leadership, are in fact those with access to revelation in the last days. Hence, they are the true "wise and understanding," who are able to discern God's eschatological kingdom work, and who have not been led astray by demonic deception in the last days (cf. 13:36-43). In this way, the imprecise term used in 11:25 to describe the revelatory content, "these things," is extremely broad for Matthew's community. It includes the entire message of the Gospel, and in light of Matthew's repeated formula-quotations, "these things" also refers to a new, Christological and salvation-historical reading of the Hebrew Scriptures. We must not rule out that this included new insight into the fulfillment of other non-canonical, esoteric texts as well.

Not only does Matthew use 11:25-27 to establish the disciples' status as exclusive recipients of revelation, but he also uses it to establish Jesus' status as a mediator of revelation. This is something that Mark clearly assumes, though never explicitly states. According to 11:27, Jesus has been entrusted with "all things." It has been argued that this is an apocalyptic short-hand reference to a comprehensive knowledge of eschatological mysteries and details. In Matthew's narrative, this establishes the basis for what is asserted in 13:1-52 especially, since there Jesus

mediates the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to the disciples exclusively. Moreover, since 11:25-27 also asserts the Father's function of revealing the Son, this exclusionary statement also looks forward to Matthew's presentation of Peter's confession and the transfiguration. Therefore, by including this Q source material where he has, Matthew gathers together into one exclusionary statement both broad categories of mysteries that are found in Mark's Gospel (i.e., the mystery of the kingdom of God, and the mystery of Jesus' messianic identity and mode), locating both within the realm of humanity among an exclusive group that is divinely selected for investiture with such insight.

Matthew also incorporates Q source material into his portrayal of the disciples in 13:16-17. It is likely that this logion was an independent exclusionary statement in Q, designed to contrast the degree of insight bestowed upon the disciples with what had been revealed to Israel's prophets and righteous of old. Although it retains this function in Matthew's narrative, it has been subsumed under the exclusionary statement of 13:11, and so supplies further exposition of it. Moreover, it lexically connects with Matthew's full quotation of Isa 6:9-10 to provide a part-for-part contrast between the perception of the disciples and the perception of Israel.

Therefore, Matthew's incorporation of Q source material has contributed substantially to his own portrayal of the disciples as the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, indirectly importing influence from the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers.

2. Another avenue of indirect influence was, of course, Matthew's appropriation of Markan source material. This indirect influence can be seen in Matthew's appropriation of an exclusionary statement, narrative isolation, dissemination details, and cognitive humanity that were found in Mark's portrayal of Peter and the disciples. Yet, Matthew's redaction indicates that his use of Mark was not simply passive borrowing.

First, in 13:11, Matthew has retained the exclusionary statement of Mark 4:11, where Jesus attributes to the disciples exclusive access to the mysteries of the kingdom. As we have noted, Matthew's redaction and expansion of what follows this exclusionary statement seems to more forcefully assert the portrayal of the disciples as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries. Matthew more forcefully contrasts the disciples in degree of revelatory insight from all others, including even the prophets of old.

Second, Matthew has generally retained Mark's use of narrative isolation, which flags the disciples' exclusive access to explanations that disclose mysteries of the kingdom. Matthew's redactional tendency, however, is to soften Mark's more emphatic, explicit, or redundant deployments of narrative isolation. This tendency is first evident in 13:10-52. There Matthew partially attenuates the sharp spatial distinction that Mark establishes between the disciples and all others. Matthew simply portrays the disciples as coming to Jesus,¹⁵⁵ and does not retain Mark's explicit citation of their solitude (cf. 13:10 to Mark 4:10). Coupled with this, Matthew does not retain Mark's reference to all others as "those outside" (cf. 13:11 to Mark 4:11), nor does he retain Mark's notice that Jesus explained everything to the disciples privately (cf. 13:34 to Mark 4:34). Yet, Matthew's insertion of the Parable of the Weeds and its explanation clarifies that he understood the revelatory significance of Mark's use of narrative isolation. Thus, Matthew specifies that the disciples requested and received an explanation of the parable after leaving the crowd and then entering the house with Jesus (13:36). In this way, Matthew concretely demonstrates what Mark describes in 4:11, 34, thereby uniquely incorporating the Markan spatial distinctions into his own portrayal of the disciples. Moreover,

155. This is a regular Matthean redactional phrase to indicate a moment of seemingly private teaching with Jesus (cf. 15:12; 17:19). *προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταί* seems to indicate separation of Jesus and the disciples. Kingsbury understands it to have a cultic connotation, which "[i]ndirectly...ascribes a lordly dignity to Jesus" (Kingsbury, *Parables*, 40–41).

Matthew adds narrative isolation to Jesus' third passion prediction, where none was found in the Markan parallel (cf. 20:17 to Mark 10:32); narrative isolation also appears in the uniquely Matthean episode of 17:24-27. In the transfiguration and teaching about the community, Matthew retains Mark's use of narrative isolation, though he again removes its emphatic redundancy (cf. 17:1 to Mark 9:2; 18:1 to Mark 9:33). At two other points, Matthew retains Mark's use of narrative isolation without adjustment (cf. 17:19 to Mark 9:28; 24:3 to Mark 13:3); still in two other places, he omits Mark's use of narrative isolation (cf. 17:22 to Mark 9:30-31; 19:9 to Mark 10:10-11). We might also add that Matthew has possibly omitted the narrative isolation that was found in Q at one point (cf. 13:17 to Luke 10:23). Therefore, there does not seem to be any perfect consistency in Matthew's handling of this feature. What can be concluded, however, is that he retains and adds narrative isolation in such a way as to indicate that he understood the revelatory significance that this feature had in Mark's narrative. This suggests that Matthew probably also understood the significance of this feature in the apocalypse genre, though this is not certain.

Third, Matthew has retained the dissemination details found in Mark's Gospel. After Peter's confession and the transfiguration, Jesus instructs the disciples that they should not disclose their exclusive insight to others (16:20; 17:9). However, Matthew has omitted Mark's somewhat redundant narrative comment that the disciples kept the matter of the transfiguration to themselves (Mark 9:10). Since Matthew has omitted several of Jesus' commands to silence that were found in Mark,¹⁵⁶ it is perhaps all the more significant that he has retained those that follow revelatory events in which the disciples exclusively participate. Here again, we must conclude that Matthew apparently understood the revelatory significance of the

156. Cf. 8:16-17 to Mark 1:34; 9:18-26 to Mark 5:43; 15:29-31 to Mark 7:36. Note also that Mark 8:26 is without Matthean parallel. However, against these note Matthew's retention of some silence commands: cf. 8:4 to Mark 1:44; 12:16 to Mark 3:12. Note also Matthew's addition in 9:30 (cf. Mark 10:46-52).

dissemination details found in Mark, though it is again not clear whether he understood their analogy with the dissemination details found in the apocalypses. Fourth, Matthew has retained Mark's portrayal of the disciples as those whose cognitive humanity parallels the cognitive humanity exhibited by apocalyptic seers. Therefore, they request explanations of Jesus' parables and do not immediately perceive his messianic identity or mode. Yet, Matthew's reworking of Peter's and the disciples' cognitive humanity warrants that the differences from Mark be considered below, as evidence for the direct influence of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers.

We have confirmed, therefore, that Mark's Gospel has thoroughly influenced Matthew's portrayal of the disciples as the exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, and as humans encountering the mysteries of the divine realm.

3. In addition to these indirect channels of influence, the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers seems to have directly influenced Matthew. Direct influence is detected in conjunction with three aspects of Matthew's portrayal of Peter and the disciples.

First, Matthew's portrayal of the disciples' cognitive humanity exhibits knowledge of a rhetorical feature in the apocalypse genre that flags the seer's progression beyond his initial cognitive humanity to a state of understanding the mysteries that have been disclosed to him. Mark has preferred to highlight the disciples' degree of understanding *prior* to the explanations supplied by Jesus, as the apocalypses often do. However, Matthew has gone one step further at points, highlighting the disciples' degree of understanding *after* Jesus' explanations, imitating the apocalypses' rhetorical emphasis of the seer's understanding. The argument was made that this is not a different portrayal of the disciples than what is found in Mark's narrative. Matthew indeed retains Mark's portrayal of the disciples

as those who require Jesus' explanations (cf. 13:36 to Mark 4:10, 34; 15:15 to Mark 7:17; 17:19 to Mark 9:28; 24:3 to Mark 13:4; 17:10 to Mark 9:11; cf. 18:1 to Mark 9:33). There are, however, four or five places where Matthew has highlighted the disciples' degree of understanding *after* the explanation (or event), where Mark has not (13:51-52; 14:33; 16:12; 17:13; possibly 17:23). Related to this, Matthew has toned down Mark's emphasis of Peter's and disciples' cognitive humanity *prior* to Jesus' explanations in four episodes (cf. 13:18 to Mark 4:13; 16:8-11 to Mark 8:17-21; 17:4-6 to Mark 9:6; 17:9 to Mark 9:10); though against this tendency, Matthew has also retained Mark's emphasis of their cognitive humanity *prior* to Jesus' explanations at other points (cf. 15:16 to Mark 7:18; 16:22-23 to Mark 8:32-33). It is noteworthy that even when Matthew has toned down Mark's portrayal of their cognitive humanity, he allows their cognitive humanity to feature nonetheless (as in 16:8-11).

If Matthew had wanted to portray Peter and the disciples simply as those who generally understood Jesus, then certain aspects of their characterization are difficult to reconcile. Instead, a more plausible conclusion is that Matthew mostly concurred with Mark's portrayal of the disciples' cognitive humanity, but decided to emphasize that Jesus' explanations indeed secured their understanding.¹⁵⁷ This is implied by Mark 4:33-34, but Matthew makes it explicit, just like the apocalypses often do in the portrayals of their seers. It is important to recognize that the apocalypses provide a precedent for incomprehension and understanding occurring within a single, unified portrayal of a literary character. Therefore, incomprehension and understanding are not necessarily at odds in Mark's or Matthew's portrayal of Peter and the disciples; they merely stand at two different points along the continuum of the disciples' revelatory experiences. Their expressions of cognitive humanity are the preludes to

157. Contra Svartvik, "Matthew and Mark," 43-45, who claims that Matthew has "rescued [Peter] from the Markan vendetta against him and his fellow disciples" (Ibid., 44).

explanations, which secure their understanding through the divine agency of the Messiah.

Second, Matthew's redaction of the transfiguration episode represents another point at which he was directly influenced by the portrayals of apocalyptic seers. He conforms Peter, but also James and John, to more standardized portrayals of apocalyptic seers that encounter beings from the divine realm. Moreover, Jesus addresses their cognitive, emotional, and physical humanity in the standard manner of a divine mediator of revelation.

Third, Matthew's special material exhibits influence from the apocalypse genre. Although it is impossible to know the degree to which Matthew's special material reflects his own creativity, it should be understood as representing direct influence, since the only thing that can be concluded about the source of this material (at this point) is that *Matthew* has incorporated it into *his Gospel*. The special material in 17:24-27 and 18:21-35 portrays Peter as individually interacting with Jesus in the manner of an apocalyptic seer, engaging in question-and-answer dialogue about halakic matters.

Matthew's placement of special material at 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50 and 25:31-46 especially, develops the portrayal of the disciples as those who have exclusive insight into matters of personal eschatology.¹⁵⁸ However, against this, it is true that personal eschatology is alluded to elsewhere in episodes that do not seem to constitute revelatory exchanges between Jesus and the disciples.¹⁵⁹ Yet, none of these other references to personal eschatology are concerned with the specific situation of the disciples (and the Matthean community) like those in 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50 and 25:31-46. The Parables of the Weeds and of the Net disclose that personal eschatology qualifies what the disciples (and the Matthean community) should do

158. Cf. 10:28, 32, 40-42; 16:27.

159. Cf. 5:22, 30; 7:21-23; 8:11-12; 12:36-37; 18:8-9; 22:29-32; 23:33; 24:51.

about the problem of “sons of the evil one” (i.e., generally the scribes and the Pharisees [cf. 15:12-14]) in their midst. The judgment of the sheep and the goats discloses that personal eschatology qualifies how the disciples (and the Matthean community) should be received and treated as they carry out their mission. Therefore, the personal eschatology that Jesus reveals exclusively to the disciples seems to be relevant personally to them in a way that other references to personal eschatology in the Gospel are not.

Furthermore, Matthew’s special material portrays the disciples as receiving insight into their own personal eschatology, which is similar to what is found in the apocalypses. They will sit on twelve thrones, participating in the judging activity of the Son of Man. Peter and the church built upon him are promised victory over the gates of Hades, which probably refers to their resurrection to eternal life at the end of days.

In conclusion, scholars have often noted Matthew’s incorporation of ‘apocalyptic’ or apocalyptic eschatology into his Gospel.¹⁶⁰ Moving beyond this observation, we have found that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has shaped Matthew’s portrayal of Peter and the disciples, both directly and indirectly. In light of this influence, it is accurate to speak of them as apocalyptic seers in some sense, as those who received exclusive disclosures of mysteries from Jesus. During their encounters with Jesus, they were portrayed as encountering, in some sense, the mysteries of the divine realm, and a being who was essentially otherworldly, despite his real participation in humanity and in the realm of humanity. Their portrayal as apocalyptic seers in this sense does not explain every aspect of their characterization in Matthew’s Gospel, but it nevertheless accounts for much.

160. E.g., Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*; Robbins, *Christian Discourse*, 456–58, see also 444–50.

In the next chapter we will discuss the implications of these conclusions for assessing Peter's significance for Matthew and the Matthean community.

CHAPTER 7

PETER'S SIGNIFICANCE FOR MATTHEW AND HIS READERS

After a summary of the preceding analysis, this final chapter will focus directly on Matthew's portrayal of Peter. The purpose will be to bring the results of this research to bear on the predominant scholarly conclusions. This study will conclude with a proposal of Peter's historical and theological significance for Matthew and his earliest readers.

Summary of Research

The aim of this study is to fill a gap in previous research concerning Peter in Matthew, especially the research of narrative-critical studies. In ch. 1, we observed that something of a consensus has emerged in the studies of Kingsbury,¹ Wilkins,² Perkins,³ Syreeni,⁴ and Wiarda⁵ concerning Matthew's portrayal of Peter. Although each of these studies recognizes that Matthew has portrayed Peter and the disciples as recipients of revelation at points, they almost entirely neglect the apocalypses (or 'apocalyptic' literature more broadly) as a potentially helpful and illuminating background for this motif, nor does the motif itself figure significantly into their conclusions.

The Portrayals of Apocalyptic Seers

In order to close this gap in research, the present research has studied the

1. Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter."

2. Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*.

3. Perkins, *Peter*.

4. Syreeni, "Character and Symbol."

5. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*.

portrayals of apocalyptic seers in fourteen different Jewish and Christian apocalypses. Since the apocalyptic seer is himself a fixture of the apocalypse genre, we identified two generic aspects of each apocalypse's portrayal of its seer: (1) apocalyptic seers are portrayed as exclusive recipients of revealed mysteries, and (2) apocalyptic seers are portrayed as humans encountering the mysteries and beings of the divine realm. These two generic aspects of the apocalypses were discussed in chs. 3 and 4, respectively. Additionally, this study has attempted to associate these generic aspects of an apocalyptic seer's portrayal with specific textual features. Thus, the features of exclusionary statements, narrative isolation, and dissemination details regularly appear in support of the seer's portrayal as an exclusive recipient of revealed mysteries. Emphasis of the seer's cognitive and emotional-physical humanity regularly appears in support of the seer's portrayal as a human encountering the mysteries and beings of the divine realm. The distribution of these features across the textbase indicates the likelihood that they would have also appeared in some, if not most, of the apocalypses that comprised the literary milieu in which Matthew and his sources wrote, and from which they borrowed, developed, and adapted. These specific textual features then provided the guiding coordinates for our study of Matthew and his main source, Mark.

Mark's Portrayal of Peter and the Disciples as Apocalyptic Seers

The analysis of Mark's Gospel determined that the portrayal of Peter and the disciples was shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers in connection with two of the Gospel's major themes.

The first theme is Jesus' enigmatic proclamation. According to Mark, Jesus' enigmatic proclamation consisted of veiled presentations of the mystery of the kingdom of God. Mark utilized exclusionary statements and narrative isolation to portray the disciples as the exclusive recipients of this mystery, which was disclosed

to them through Jesus' private explanations. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus' explanations function analogously to the revelatory episodes in the apocalypses wherein a divine mediator of revelation delivers the explanation of a dream or vision to the seer. Jesus' explanations are preceded by features which flag the disciples' cognitive humanity. Thus, the disciples require and request explanations of Jesus' veiled presentations of this mystery, and Jesus responds similarly to how divine mediators of revelation sometimes respond in the apocalypses when confronted with a seer's cognitive humanity. Through Jesus' explanations, delivered privately to the disciples, they achieve a degree of understanding, and are portrayed as having exclusive insight into a mystery that humans cannot otherwise apprehend.⁶ The explanations indicate that the mystery of the kingdom of God is largely related to eschatological mysteries concerning the gradual inauguration of the kingdom and its eventual consummation, and matters related to community life during the time between the inauguration and consummation of the kingdom. In this way, Mark portrays the disciples very similarly to apocalyptic seers, albeit in a different genre of literature.

The second theme is Jesus' messianic identity and mode. Although Mark never refers to this as a mystery, he clearly envisaged it as such. However, in contrast with the mystery of the kingdom of God, the mystery of Jesus' messianic identity and mode is more gradually disclosed to the disciples across the entire narrative. In other words, they do not move from imperception to understanding in a single episode, as in the cases of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation. Prior to Peter's confession, humans fail to perceive Jesus' messianic identity. Human imperception is presented in stark contrast to voices from the divine realm that declare Jesus to be the Messiah. The disciples, like other humans in the narrative, do not quickly arrive at an

6. Thus, in Mark's view, since Jesus delivers revelation to the disciples, it is probably more accurate to refer to the content of Jesus' teaching as *Offenbarungsunterweisung*, rather than as "esoterische Unterweisung" or "esoterische Belehrung" (Riesner, *Jesus als Lehrer*, 476–87). The latter two terms place more emphasis on the secrecy of the teaching, but the former term has the advantage of emphasizing Mark's estimation that the teaching content was revelatory in nature.

understanding of Jesus' identity, but linger in a state of imperception. Their imperception in this regard is analogous to the cognitive humanity that initially prevents an apocalyptic seer from grasping the fundamental significance of the revelatory content that he observes, or from adopting the divine perspective that is required for him to perceive the theological reality of his circumstances. For example, in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* especially, the seer's converted perspective is the result of the cumulative impact of the individual revelatory episodes, which gradually recalibrate his human point of view. Similarly, the disciples' continued presence with Jesus during the miracles and events of his ministry (cf. 3:14) enables them to gradually awaken to a divine perspective on the matter of Jesus' messianic identity and mode.⁷ Thus, their presence with Jesus has a revelatory aspect to it.

There seems to be three important stages in this gradual process of 'awakening'. In the first stage, which lasts from the calling of the disciples until Jesus' warning about the yeast of the Pharisees and Herod (1:16-8:21), the disciples' cognitive humanity prevents them from perceiving Jesus' messianic identity, climaxing with Jesus' questions in 8:17-21. In the second stage (8:27-30), Peter's confession represents an initial progression beyond the previous limitations of their cognitive humanity, since Peter correctly identifies Jesus as the Christ in contrast with other human estimations of him. The third stage begins immediately thereafter (8:31-10:34), as Jesus plainly tells the disciples about the mode of his messiahship. This disclosure provokes Peter to rebuke him. In this stage, three disciples witness the transfiguration, but all of them receive additional disclosures of Jesus' mode of messiahship as the suffering, then resurrected, Son of Man. Mark incorporates the features of narrative isolation and dissemination details into the episodes of Peter's

7. Mark presents the sea miracles (i.e., 4:35-41; 6:45-52) and the feeding miracles (i.e., 6:30-44; 8:1-13) together as a unified body of work through which Jesus reveals his messianic identity. This is supported by the common scenarios of each set of miracles, the intratextual references binding them together (6:51-52; 8:18-20), and the inclusio questions of Jesus' identity (4:41; 8:27-30).

confession, the transfiguration, and Jesus' passion predictions, signalling that these are revelatory episodes of sorts. The disciples also continue to exhibit their cognitive humanity, showing the difficulty with which their human perspective is adjusted. Although there are clues that the disciples did indeed achieve some degree of understanding regarding Jesus' messianic mode, this is not made especially explicit in the narrative world.⁸ This is similar to the book of Daniel, which concludes while Daniel is in a state of perplexity, despite the explanations of eschatological mysteries that are delivered to him. Mark clearly intends for his readers to draw from their knowledge of post-Easter tradition, which would allow them to deduce that the resurrection was the ultimate unriddling of Jesus' messianic mode. The resurrection decisively removed the disciples' imperception that was left unresolved in the narrative world.

We observed that Peter is mainly undistinguished from the Twelve in connection with Jesus' enigmatic proclamation. Thus, the Twelve collectively occupy the role that the apocalypses reserve for an individual apocalyptic seer. The only possible exception to this is in Jesus' explanation to his prophecy of the temple's destruction in Mark 13. There, Peter is one of four (the first-called) to receive a detailed explanation of the events in the last days leading up to the coming of the Son of Man. On the other hand, Peter is much more prominent in connection with the theme of Jesus' messianic identity and mode (esp. 8:27-9:13). Peter correctly confesses Jesus' identity as the Christ, rebukes Jesus' passion prediction, and is one of three to participate in the transfiguration. In each of these episodes, Peter acts individually. It is inadequate to conclude that his individual speech and action in these episodes simply exhibits his role as spokesman for the other disciples present

8. After Jesus' final passion prediction, the question of James and John, and their affirmation that they can share in Jesus' "cup" (10:35-45), suggest that Mark envisages this as the point in the narrative when the disciples understand and embrace (at least in theory) Jesus' fate. Peter's claim to remain faithful to death (affirmed by the other disciples as well) corroborates this (14:27-31).

with him in the setting. To be certain, Peter's prominence in these episodes cannot be reduced to the act of speaking while others remain silent. The nature of the episodes in 8:27-9:13 dictates that we view Peter's prominence in this section as that of *individually embodying and voicing an important advance in perception* (8:29), and *important limitations of cognitive humanity* (8:32-33; 9:5-6), that seem to be characteristic of the larger group of disciples with whom he is closely associated. In this way, Peter speaks and acts as an individual, but the participation of the other disciples in these episodes suggests that he does so as a literary representative for them, personally embodying the perception and cognitive humanity that extends to the other disciples because of his close association with them. Yet, apart from the theme of Jesus' messianic identity and mode, and apart from the crucial section of 8:27-9:13, Peter's prominence does not relate to his functioning in this capacity of embodying advances in perception and limitations of the disciples' cognitive humanity. For this reason, Peter's prominence elsewhere does not seem to have any analogy with the generic portrayals of apocalyptic seers, even when he assumes a representative role.⁹

We conclude that Mark has portrayed the disciples similarly to apocalyptic seers in conjunction with two of his Gospel's major themes. Peter is individually prominent in conjunction with one of these themes. He individually embodies and voices an important advance in perception and important limitations of cognitive humanity that are characteristic of the disciples with whom he is closely related while encountering the mystery of Jesus' messianic identity and mode. Therefore, from

9. Peter's prominence in comparison to the other disciples is noted in Mark's portrayal of him as: one of the four first-called (1:16-20); one who has special proximity to Jesus (5:37-43; 14:33-42, 54-72); one who speaks as an individual (11:20-21; cf. also James and John in 10:35-40) and on behalf of the other disciples (10:28; John does so as well in 9:38); one who has special prominence in the Passion Narrative (14:29-31, 37-42, 54, 66-72); and one whose name is foregrounded relative to others (1:36-37; 3:16-19; 16:7). Bauckham relates the prominence of Peter's name to a *plural-to-singular narrative device*, arguing that both stand as evidence for Peter's eyewitness perspective (Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 155-82).

8:27-9:13, *Peter's representative role consists of individually acting as an apocalyptic seer*—though not independently from the other disciples present, who elsewhere *collectively* act as apocalyptic seers. However, in making this claim, it is important to recognize that Mark's Gospel does not portray Peter and the disciples *only* as apocalyptic seers, nor is this aspect of their portrayal evident at every point. Indeed, Mark has written a gospel rather than an apocalypse, and so his concern is with events related to Jesus, not simply the revelation about, or mediated by, Jesus. Nonetheless, the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers has significantly shaped Mark's portrayal of Peter and the disciples.

Matthew's Portrayal of Peter and the Disciples as Apocalyptic Seers

Matthew's portrayal of Peter and the disciples has been shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers in conjunction with the same two themes as in Mark's Gospel: 1) Jesus' enigmatic proclamation, and 2) Jesus' messianic identity and mode. Since much of this shaping is an effect of Matthew's appropriation of Markan source material, many of the conclusions about Mark's Gospel stand as valid for Matthew's. However, Matthew's redaction, incorporation of Q source material, and his own special material yield a more fully developed, or more explicit, portrayal of Peter and the disciples as apocalyptic seers.

The starting-point of our analysis was with Matthew's incorporation of Q 10:21-22 in 11:25-27. This exclusionary statement asserts the disciples' status as exclusive recipients of revelation concerning Jesus' significance, and it contrasts them with the supposed "wise and understanding." This contrast is essential for understanding the remainder of the narrative. "Wise and understanding" likely reflects the self-designation and self-conception of the scribes and Pharisees—in Matthew's historical context and as remembered in the Jesus tradition—as those who possessed the requisite wisdom and insight to discern the work of God in the last

days, and to function as teachers in the last days. In other words, they presumed to be the inheritors of eschatological insight in the last days, like the figures described in such texts as Dan 11:33; 12:3, 10; *1 En.* 82:2-3; 100:6; 104:12-105:1; *4 Ezra* 12:38; 14:13, 26, 45-48; *2 Bar.* 27:15-28:1. It was in this status as the “wise and understanding” that they acted as teachers of the people. However, these presumed “wise and understanding” had missed the true significance of John and Jesus, and the Pharisees had concluded that they were agents of Beelzeboul. Therefore, this exclusionary statement is polemical, asserting that Jesus’ followers, apparent “children” in the estimation of the scribes and Pharisees, are actually those who constitute the “wise and understanding” in the last days. In a sense, this polemic against false claimants to revelation is similar to that found particularly in the book of Daniel, where Daniel’s access to revelation is asserted along with a polemic against the Babylonian mantics.¹⁰ The Father’s act of revealing looks forward to 16:17, when Jesus attributes Peter’s confession to revelation from the Father, and to 17:5, when the Father’s voice confirms Jesus’ identity. Additionally, we concluded that 11:25-27 likely alludes to Jesus’ comprehensive knowledge of eschatological mysteries, and his role as mediator of revelation. In Matthew’s narrative, this looks forward to Jesus’ mediation of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to his disciples in 13:10-52; 15:1-21; 16:5-12; 17:14-20; 18:21-35; 24:1-25:46.

In 13:10-52, Matthew designates the disciples as exclusive recipients of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. As in Mark 4:10-34, Matthew uses exclusionary statements and narrative isolation to make this point. We noted that Matthew has substantially escalated this portrayal of the disciples by rearranging his Markan source material, including the full quotation of Isa 6:9-10, and including Q 10:23-24 in 13:16-17. The Q logion especially heightens the sense that the disciples exceed the insight of Israel’s entire prophetic tradition, not just the insight possessed by their

10. Dan 1:18-20; cf. 2:11 to 2:21-22; 2:27-28; 4:7 to 4:19-24; 5:7-9, 15 to 5:16ff.

contemporaries. This is a step considerably beyond what Mark asserts about the disciples in the parallel exclusionary statement of 4:10-12. Matthew's redaction of 13:10-52 exhibits tendencies that are evident elsewhere in the episodes that conform to the basic revelatory paradigm established in this foundational narrative section. Thus, Matthew sometimes softens Mark's emphatic or redundant uses of narrative isolation. With regard to the disciples' cognitive humanity, Matthew has emphasized their understanding *after* Jesus' explanations, rather than the degree of their cognitive humanity *prior* to the explanations. This results in a clearer picture of the disciples as those who *understand* the mysteries that Jesus reveals to them through his explanations in private settings, bolstering their status as reliable conduits of divine revelation. Matthew has also added disclosures of personal eschatology among Jesus' private explanations to the disciples, and he asserts that the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are the crowning edition of all previous eschatological mysteries, rendering all others outmoded and incomplete. Once again, this constructs the disciples' status as those with true insight into eschatological mysteries, while engaging in polemic against other claimants to such insight. Like Mark, then, Matthew has portrayed the disciples very similarly to apocalyptic seers in connection with the theme of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation.

The theme of Jesus' messianic identity and mode appears substantially differently in Matthew than in Mark. Mark's contrast between divine and human estimations of Jesus dissipates in Matthew's narrative, since he has eliminated demonic pronouncements concerning Jesus' identity. Moreover, prior to Peter's confession, Matthew has hinted that some characters do perhaps recognize that Jesus is the Messiah (2:1-2, 3-6; 11:25-27; 12:15-16), and he has reduced the level of cognitive humanity that the disciples display with regard to Jesus' identity (14:33; 16:5-12). Therefore, in Matthew's narrative, Peter's confession does not represent the *first* time that humans had perceived Jesus' messianic identity. Instead, it concretely

depicts what 11:25-27 speaks of more generally. Matthew's version of the confession definitively establishes the veracity of the identification of Jesus as the Messiah, since it explicitly grounds this reality in revelation from the Father. We also noted that Matthew's version is polemical, asserting Peter's independence from human sources of authority, rooting the authority of his confession in revelation alone. In this respect, 16:17 employs rhetoric that is very similar to Paul's rhetoric in Gal 1:11-12, 15-16.

After Peter's confession, Matthew more closely follows Mark's portrayal of Peter and the disciples with regard to Jesus' messianic mode. Thus, Peter's cognitive humanity features in his rebuke of Jesus' passion prediction. The disciples' human point of view is then adjusted through the transfiguration and successive disclosures of Jesus' messianic mode as the suffering Son of Man. As with the Markan parallels, narrative isolation and dissemination details appear again at points in these episodes, flagging their revelatory nature and significance. Matthean redaction has again emphasized that the disciples understood Jesus' disclosures concerning his messianic mode.

We conclude that Matthew's portrayal Peter and the disciples has been shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers. This shaping has come indirectly, through Mark and Q, but also directly through Matthean redaction and special material. Insofar as the disciples received disclosures of mysteries from Jesus and insight into Jesus' messianic identity and mode, Matthew has portrayed them as apocalyptic seers. As was concluded with reference to Mark, this does not account for every aspect of Matthew's portrayal of these characters, but it explains much.

Peter in Matthew

We have delayed sustained discussion of Peter in Matthew until now. There are two reasons for this procedure. First, the foundation of this study all along has

been that one must bring the apocalypses' portrayals of their seers to bear on the portrayal of Peter. Therefore, a significant portion of this study has been devoted to completing the groundwork of identifying generic aspects of the portrayals of apocalyptic seers, and associating these with specific textual features that may appear in other genres of ancient literature, such as gospels. Due to the fact that Peter is closely related to the disciples in Matthew and his source material, we determined that the best procedure was to analyze how the portrayal of the disciples as a group had been shaped by that of apocalyptic seers, before focusing too narrowly on Peter. Moreover, we proceeded through Mark's Gospel first. Such a procedure allowed for closer attention to overarching themes and theological motifs in Mark's Gospel rather than just the fragmented points that were relevant for Matthean redaction. In other words, this procedure through Mark first allowed for our study of Matthew to note similarities with, and differences from, Mark in the overarching thematic issues bound up with our questions about the disciples and Peter, heeding Kingsbury's original call for greater theological synthesis.¹¹ Second, rather than providing sustained treatment of specific questions related to Peter in the individual passages that we covered, it seemed simpler to provide a synthetic discussion of these questions here in dialogue with recent narrative-critical studies representing the *modified typical disciple view*.

Overview of the Modified Typical Disciple View

Kingsbury referred to the portrayal of Peter in Matthew as a "theological problem," basing his claim on the fact that redaction critics had come to divergent conclusions. As he saw it, one view attributed too much weight to Peter's uniqueness, concluding that he was "supreme Rabbi,"¹² while the other view minimized Matthew's special focus on Peter, concluding that he was merely a

11. Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 69, 76.

12. Cf. Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung*, 59–64.

“typical disciple.”¹³ According to Kingsbury, each of these unbalanced views was the result of a methodological flaw in redaction criticism, which did not strive to integrate conclusions about Peter with Matthew’s overall thought or theology.¹⁴ In other words, Matthew’s theology, as expressed in the entire narrative, must act as a control for assessments of Peter resting on a few choice passages, such as 16:13-20. To be sure, Kingsbury and the narrative-critical studies that have followed him have succeeded in articulating conclusions that are more integrated with the larger currents of Matthean theology. Consequently, they emphasize both uniqueness and typicality in the Matthean Peter.

Several proponents of the *modified typical disciple view* have argued that Peter’s uniqueness is that of *salvation-historical primacy*.¹⁵ In other words, his uniqueness is primarily chronological in nature, since he was the first disciple called (4:18-19), which is the significance of Matthew’s specification that he is “first” in the listing of the Twelve (10:2). As a result of his place as first-called, Peter functions as a spokesman for the group of disciples. Therefore, his *role* as spokesman is a manifestation of his uniqueness, but the *content* of his speech is normally related to his typical or representative status. When Peter speaks, he does so as one who gives voice to questions and views that are typical of the disciples who are with him; his interaction with Jesus is carried out on behalf of the larger groups of disciples. The present study concurs with the *modified typical disciple view* that the tension between Peter’s uniqueness and typicality must be maintained if one intends to integrate Peter’s portrait with Matthean theology. However, certain aspects of this predominant scholarly position are in need of revision and qualification, especially in

13. Cf. Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, 198–206.

14. Kingsbury, “Figure of Peter,” 69.

15. Ibid., 80; Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 212; Syreeni, “Character and Symbol,” 149–50

n. 80.

light of our claim that the Matthean Peter has been shaped by the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers.

Peter as Spokesman

One must question the extent to which Peter actually functions as a spokesman. Whereas some see Peter functioning as a spokesman nearly every time that he speaks,¹⁶ Wiarda's more reserved analysis is correct that "only in 15:15 and 19:27 can [Peter] be safely described as a spokesman for the others."¹⁷ In both of these places, Peter's request is that Jesus explain some matter for the group of disciples, as his use of the dative, first-person plural personal pronoun indicates (Φράσον ἡμῖν [15:15]; τί ἄρα ἔσται ἡμῖν; [19:27]). Although Peter states during the transfiguration, κύριε, καλὸν ἐστὶν ἡμᾶς ὧδε εἶναι, this is his own analysis of the situation, and the remainder of his statement articulates his individual proposal to build three shelters (εἰ θέλεις, ποιήσω... [17:4]). Peter's confession is sometimes related to his role as spokesman as well, since Jesus indeed directs his questions to all of the disciples (16:13-16). However, since Jesus' blessing of Peter in 16:17-19 addresses Peter individually, it is tenuous to understand the confession itself as an expression of Peter's spokesmanship.¹⁸ Additionally, in Gethsemane, Jesus asks Peter about the inability of the three to keep watch. Peter never answers, and so does not function as a spokesman; he appears instead to be one who is addressed as a representative of those who are with him. Finally, Peter's avowals of fidelity to Jesus in 26:33, 35 are also sometimes viewed as expressions of his spokesman role. What Peter says there, however, he says for himself, attempting to contrast his own fidelity

16. Luz sees Peter as a spokesman in 15:15; 16:22-23; 17:24; 18:21; 19:27-30; 26:33-34 (Luz, *Matthew 8–20*, 366); Kingsbury locates Peter's spokesman role in 15:15; 16:15-16, 22; 17:4, 24-27; 18:21; 19:27; 26:33, 35, 40 (Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 71–72); Brown, Donfried, and Reumann, *Peter in the New Testament*, 77–78, view Peter as a spokesman in 15:15; 17:4; 18:21-22; 19:27; Wilkins views Peter as a spokesman in 8:14; 14:28-29, 30-31, 33; 15:15; 16:16-19; 17:4, 24; 18:21; 19:27; 26:37, 40 (Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 209).

17. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels*, 167.

18. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 619–20.

with that of the other disciples. That the other disciples mimic his profession of loyalty does not take away from the fact that Peter speaks for himself.

Therefore, unless it is explicitly clear that Peter speaks for the disciples (as in 15:15 and 19:27), it is probably best to conclude that he speaks his own individual thoughts, responses, and questions.¹⁹ After all, in the only other case of individual members of the Twelve, aside from Peter, speaking to Jesus,²⁰ James and John affirm that they can drink the same cup as Jesus, speaking only for themselves, not the group (20:22).²¹ Moreover, *Matthew regularly attributes speech to the entire group of disciples*, demonstrating that he does not require an individual spokesman to represent the views and questions of the group.²² Furthermore, if Matthew envisaged Peter as a spokesman for the group, it is remarkable that he has not portrayed him as such in these many other places. Peter's role as spokesman in 15:15 and 19:27 therefore deviates from the normal practice of ascribing speech and thoughts to the disciples collectively. This raises the question of why Peter speaks for the group *in these places*. This question is more pressing in the case of 15:15, since Peter's prominence there is entirely the result of Matthean redaction.

We discussed 15:1-20 under the theme of Jesus' enigmatic proclamation. As was the case with this theme in Mark, the disciples collectively function in the role of apocalyptic seer, receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Requests for explanation are expressions of their cognitive humanity, which demonstrate their dependency upon Jesus in order to understand the mysteries that are disclosed to them (cf. 13:10, 36; 17:19; 24:3). In 15:15, *Peter individually acts as an apocalyptic seer*, requesting an explanation from Jesus, and in so doing acts as a spokesman for

19. As in 14:28, 30; 16:16, 22; 17:4, 24-26; 18:21; 26:33, 35a, 70, 72, 74.

20. Judas' individual speech is not considered, since he clearly speaks for himself (cf. 26:25, 48-49).

21. Their (mother's) concern to acquire the right and left positions removes any possibility that they speak for the group.

22. Cf. 8:25, 27; 13:10, 36, 51; 14:15, 17, 26, 33; 15:12, 23, 33, 34; 16:7, 14; 17:10, 19; 18:1; 19:10, 13, 25; 21:20; 24:1, 3; 26:8-9, 17, 35b.

the group of disciples who share in Jesus' explanation. The reason for his prominence in 15:15 likely has to do with the nature of what Jesus discloses, not a Matthean capitulation to some default spokespersonship of Peter. Jesus' enigmatic proclamation is related to true cleanliness and uncleanness—matters of halakah which were centrally important to the scribes and Pharisees of Jerusalem (15:1). After Jesus indicts both groups as hypocrites (v. 7), he tells the disciples to leave the Pharisees because they are blind guides. Then Peter brings the focus back to halakah with his request for an explanation (v. 15). It is interesting that Matthew does not portray Peter as individually raising the question of v. 12, but only of v. 15. Based on Peter's individual prominence elsewhere in relation to the matter of halakah taught by Jesus (17:24-26; 18:21), it seems likely that the reason for his prominence in 15:15 is also a result of the fact that Jesus discloses halakah in his explanation. Peter's cognitive humanity, as reflected in his request, secures halakah for the Twelve that is taught as a matter of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and stands in direct contrast to the human traditions of the scribes and Pharisees (vv. 6-9).²³

In 19:27, Peter acts as a spokesman for the disciples again, asking Jesus what is in store for them as recompense for the sacrifices that they have made to follow him. In the previous chapter, we treated this passage as evidence for the influence of the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers. Matthew has portrayed the disciples as receiving insight into matters of their own personal eschatology, much as apocalyptic seers do. Thus, Peter's request secures for the Twelve an understanding of their personal fate when the Son of Man returns, disclosing their prominence as Israel's judges and as eschatological agents of the Son of Man. We suggested that Peter's request here reflects Matthew's desire to associate him especially with insight

23. Cf. Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung*, 59; Perkins, *Peter*, 66–67.

concerning the eschatological fate of the Twelve and the eschatological fate of those who, like the disciples, leave everything to engage in Jesus' mission.

Therefore, we conclude with Wiarda that Peter's spokesman role is limited to 15:15 and 19:27. However, the present study adds that his role as spokesman in both of these places involves acting in the generic manner of an apocalyptic seer. Peter's speech exhibits cognitive humanity which leads to explanations of enigmatic matters, and thereby secures an understanding of divine mysteries within the realm of humanity. Since he speaks for the Twelve in both cases, and since they are present with him in the settings, they gain access to explanations and understanding as a result of his cognitive humanity. Peter's role as spokesman does not merely consist of speaking for others while they remain silent; it consists of individually acting as an apocalyptic seer on behalf of the Twelve.

Peter's Individuality

Having concluded that Peter's role as spokesman for the disciples is rather limited, we therefore conclude that, beyond 15:15 and 19:27, Peter speaks and acts as an individual, and is not portrayed as attempting to voice the views or concerns of the other disciples. In light of the preceding research, there are a few relevant observations to make about Peter's individuality.

First, in 18:21, Peter individually expresses his own cognitive humanity with regard to the limits of forgiveness. In so doing, he individually behaves as an apocalyptic seer, and so receives Jesus' explanation of how forgiveness in the kingdom of heaven is reckoned. Although Peter does not speak for the other disciples, they also receive Jesus' explanation, and so benefit from his individual cognitive humanity. Therefore, 18:21 is very similar to 15:15 and 19:27, since Peter's expression of cognitive humanity results in an explanation of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to the group of disciples. In these places, Peter individually

expresses cognitive humanity that the disciples collectively express elsewhere in the narrative. Somewhat differently, 17:25b-27 presents Peter's individual dialogue with Jesus, which secures Jesus' teaching regarding the matter of the temple tax. It is unclear whether the disciples also share in the insight that Jesus' teaching grants to Peter. Nevertheless, the pattern of dialogue involved here is revelatory in nature, and generally conforms to the question/answer/elaboration sequence of 13:51-52, which the Twelve collectively participate in.

Second, as was the case in Mark's Gospel, the center-piece of Peter's individual speech and activity (outside of the Passion Narrative) is found in connection with the theme of Jesus' messianic identity and mode, in the important section of 16:13-17:13. Our conclusions about his prominence in Mark 8:27-9:13 also generally apply with reference to 16:13-17:13, though with some further comments and qualifications. In this section, *Peter individually expresses an important matter of revelation (16:16), and important limitations of cognitive humanity (16:22-23; 17:4) that seem to be characteristic of the larger group of disciples with whom he is closely associated.* In so doing, Peter individually acts as an apocalyptic seer, whereas groups of disciples collectively occupy the role of an apocalyptic seer elsewhere.

Matthean redaction of 16:13-20 requires further comment about Peter's individuality here. Peter individually makes the confession, expressing his own conviction, and Jesus blesses Peter as an individual in response to this confession. With the special material of 16:17-19, Matthew localizes five important claims in Peter as an individual:

1. Verse 17 localizes in Peter the claim that perception of Jesus' messianic identity is a result of divine revelation directly from the Father.
2. Verse 17 also localizes in Peter the claim that the confession of Jesus as the Messiah stands as *valid revelation* apart from any previous tradition or revelation stemming from another figure or group. The confession is

revelation that stands as valid apart from the authorization or approval of flesh and blood. Thus, the polemical thrust of the revelation is localized in Peter.

3. Verse 18 localizes in Peter the claim that Jesus began and established his church, which should be understood here as referring to a newly founded sect within Judaism that constitutes the true sons of Abraham (cf. 3:9). This sect, founded by Jesus, had direct access to revelation from the Father.

4. Verse 18 also localizes in Peter the eschatological claim that the church will experience the resurrection of the dead, breaking through the gates of Hades at the return of the Son of Man to fully lay hold of eternal life.

5. Verse 19 localizes in Peter the claim that granting entrance into, and exclusion from, the kingdom of heaven is not a prerogative of the scribes and Pharisees (cf. 23:13), but a prerogative bestowed upon Peter by the Messiah.

In saying that these five claims are *localized* in Peter, we are not suggesting that they have nothing to do with the rest of the Twelve. Nevertheless, Peter speaks as an individual in 16:16, and Jesus addresses Peter as an individual in 16:17-19.

Third, since Matthew has attributed to the disciples insight into Jesus' messianic identity elsewhere (11:25-27; 14:33), it would seem that Matthew does not portray Peter as *the exclusive* recipient of revelation from the Father concerning Jesus' messianic identity. Rather, 16:16 localizes in Peter the revelatory insight that is generalized to the Twelve in 11:25 and 14:33. Moreover, the claims that Matthew localizes in Peter in 16:17-19 seem to be generalized to the Twelve elsewhere as well. Since the Twelve have likewise received revelation of Jesus' messianic identity, they collectively act as bearers of authoritative truth about Jesus, which stands independently valid apart from the authorization of others; they share the duty of its appropriate dissemination (16:20). The Twelve are together listed as those who comprise the primary unit of disciples directly called by Jesus, and as those who carry out the mission of Jesus (10:2-4). They are also closely involved in Jesus' establishment of his church (28:18-20). They are also those who enjoy the authority of granting entrance into, and exclusion from, the kingdom of heaven, forgiving the sins of others (18:18-19; cf. 9:1-8). Finally, the Twelve are also associated with the

eschatological events related to the coming of the Son of Man (19:28-29). Therefore, the claims that 16:17-19 localize in Peter apparently reflect claims that are more generally applied to the Twelve. The real interpretive question here is not whether the blessing of 16:17-19 suggests a unique role for Peter, but *why* the blessing localizes these claims in him. This question is taken up in the next section, since it relates to Peter's significance for Matthew and his readers.

Matthew portrays Peter as a character who largely speaks and acts as an individual, on his own behalf. In nearly every case, his individual speech (even when as a spokesman) expresses cognitive humanity (cf. 15:15; 16:22; 17:4; 18:21); the disciples collectively express this cognitive humanity elsewhere. In 17:25b-27, Peter engages in individual dialogue with Jesus that is analogous to the pattern of private dialogue in 13:51-52, where the disciples collectively speak. In 16:16, Peter individually confesses his revelatory insight into Jesus' messianic identity, though this is insight granted to the disciples collectively elsewhere (11:25; 14:33). Finally, in 16:17-19, Jesus individually blesses Peter. With this blessing, Matthew localizes in Peter several claims that he generalizes to the group elsewhere. Therefore, we concur with the *modified typical disciple view* that even Peter's individuality and uniqueness is inseparable from the general characterization of the Twelve in Matthew's narrative and theology. Thus, it is appropriate to acknowledge that Peter, as a literary character, is typical or representative of them in his individuality. However, acknowledging this does not explain why Matthew has portrayed Peter so prominently. The explanation likely relates to the significance of Peter for Matthew, which we shall cover below.

Peter's Significance for Matthew and His Readers

Proponents of the *modified typical disciple view* discuss Peter's significance for Matthew and the Matthean community primarily in terms of discipleship and

salvation-history. The present research requires revision of conclusions about Peter's significance in both regards.

An Example of Discipleship?

Narrative-critical studies of the Matthean Peter (like some redaction-critical studies) usually proceed by sifting the data related to Peter into a range of "positive" and "negative" categories.²⁴ Some studies are much more nuanced than others, including "neutral" categories, and perhaps different shades of "positive" and "negative." Such categorization of data or character traits is not inherently flawed. Yet, as a matter of principle, one must not rely on the narrative world of Matthew's Gospel as the *only* control on this process of categorization. Indeed, how can any particular narrative critic ascertain whether his or her sifting of the data plausibly reflects how the ancient author or readers would have sifted and interpreted that same data? This question is all the more pressing in cases where one narrative critic classifies a feature as positive, while another narrative critic classifies the same feature as negative. Studies of the portrayal of Peter (and studies of the disciples more generally) are plagued with a lack of controls external to Matthew's Gospel on determinations of positive or negative data. Herein lies the value of background studies for narrative criticism, and the value of consulting texts external to an individual narrative for the sake of understanding the delimited story-world of a given text.

The present study suggests that the generic portrayal of apocalyptic seers provides a control for how some of the data related to Peter should be classified. We noted that 15:15; 16:22; 17:4; 18:21; and 19:27 are expressions of Peter's cognitive humanity as he encounters the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and the mystery

24. Cf. Kingsbury, "Figure of Peter," 69–70; Nau, *Peter*, 25; Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 208–9, 240. Sometimes the categories are merely implied, as in Bornkamm, "Authority," 93–94.

of Jesus' messianic identity and mode. In these places, Peter exhibits cognitive humanity that is standard in portrayals of apocalyptic seers, and Jesus sometimes responds by highlighting Peter's cognitive humanity in the standard manner of a divine mediator of revelation. When such expressions of cognitive humanity occur in the apocalypses, they serve to escalate the contrast between the seer's natively human point of view, and the mediator's natively divine perspective on certain matters. In other words, expressions of cognitive humanity are the rhetorical embroidery of a clash between humanity and divinity—between apocalyptic seer and the realities of the divine realm. Rarely are moral lessons tied to the seer's cognitive humanity, and rarely is his cognitive humanity something that could or should have been avoided.²⁵ Instead, the seer's cognitive humanity is something that must be adjusted by the divine perspective projected by the revelations recounted in the text. In light of this background, it is extremely unlikely that Peter's cognitive humanity in these places is primarily designed to aid in the moral development of Matthew's readers, or to teach them how to behave as good disciples by avoiding the type of imperception that Peter exhibits. Against the *modified typical disciple view*, therefore, Peter's cognitive humanity in 15:15; 16:22; 17:4; 18:21; and 19:27 does not exemplify negative (or perhaps positive) aspects of discipleship. The apocalypses clarify that these aspects of Peter's portrayal show him to behave in the standard manner of an apocalyptic seer while encountering mysteries of the divine realm and the Messiah himself, who was regarded as perhaps the supreme mystery of apocalyptic eschatology. Therefore, neither Matthew nor his readers who were familiar with the apocalypses would have categorized these data of Peter's portrayal in a manner that scholars normally do.

25. The only example of moralizing a seer's cognitive humanity in the fourteen apocalypses surveyed in Part 1 was found in the portrayal of Hermas. This aspect of his portrayal is an effect of the text's aim at redirecting the Christian scheme of revelation away from the modes of revelation contained in apocalypses.

The other side of this coin is that some of the so-called “positive” aspects of Peter’s portrayal have been misunderstood in terms of their significance for Matthew and his readers. Most significantly, Peter’s confession in 16:16 is not primarily designed to present a positive example of discipleship, as Wilkins claims.²⁶ Although Matthew surely would not have objected to subsequent disciples confessing Jesus in similar terms as Peter does, his primary purpose is not to use Peter as an example for this. Instead, Matthew’s aim is to localize in Peter revelation from the Father about Jesus’ messianic identity that was generalized to the Twelve elsewhere (11:25-27; 14:33). In this way, he portrays Peter as an apocalyptic seer who receives and articulates divine revelation. For Matthew, this was much more than a lesson about discipleship; Peter’s confession was the event during Jesus’ ministry when revelation warranted a split from the Judaism of the scribes and Pharisees, and legitimated the establishment of a messianic Judaism that would administer the kingdom of heaven to Israel and the nations while awaiting a resurrection to life at the coming of the Son of Man. Indeed, as Peter learns soon after his confession, the Judaism of the scribes and Pharisees is ultimately what leads to the Messiah’s death. For Matthew and his community, *the significance of Peter’s confession was its significance during the ministry of Jesus*, when a break from other forms of Judaism was made on the basis of divine revelation. It actually had very little to do with discipleship, and everything to do with revelation.

Peter’s Salvation-historical Significance.

We disagree with those proponents of the *modified typical disciple view* who

26. Commenting on Peter’s confession, Wilkins says, “Peter represents all the disciples, and since the disciples in Mt are an example for all believers, Peter acts as a personal example for all believers. His confession is a model confession for all believers. His courage in stepping forward is an example of boldness in the face of diverse opinions about Jesus. The way he acts as a spokesman is an example of boldness and leadership in the church. He is also an example of how entrance is made to the kingdom: confession and ‘loosing’, or forgiveness of sin” (Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 198).

conclude that Peter's unique significance is his "salvation-historical primacy," or that his salvation-historical place as "first" is the reason why he functions as spokesman or representative of the disciples. Although Peter was indeed called first, he was simultaneously called along with Andrew (4:18-20).²⁷ Yet Andrew retains no individuality or uniqueness from the group of Twelve, aside from his association as a brother with Peter in both the calling and the list of Twelve. On the other hand, James and John are members of the "inner circle" of disciples, and so surpass Andrew in prominence, who technically held the salvation-historical place of first along with Peter. Moreover, Matthew likely intends that the successive callings of Peter and Andrew and James and John be read as a unit, with little if any chronological distinction between their calls (4:18-22). Furthermore, since the identification of Peter as "first" occurs in the *commissioning of the Twelve as apostles* (10:2), it would seem to reflect an order of commissioning rather than an order of calling—if it reflects any chronological ordering at all.

Most likely, the reference to Peter as "first" in the list of Twelve reflects his status in terms of prominence, rank, or significance among *the apostles* as those who carry out the mission of Jesus to Israel (10:5-42) and to the Gentiles (28:18-20)—not his place as first in the chronology of salvation-history. With 10:2, Matthew signals the importance of Peter in the narrative that unfolds in his Gospel, and in the post-Easter community of Jesus' followers. Judas Iscariot's last place on the list corroborates this notion, since he was only a temporary member of the group, and did not continue the post-Easter mission of Jesus. Matthew inherited Mark's portrayal of Peter as the most prominent member of the Twelve. Matthew, because of Peter's status as first in terms of prominence, rank, or significance, localized further constitutive theological claims in him.²⁸ Thus, the claims of 16:17-19 are spoken to

27. So Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 651.

28. However, it must be acknowledged that Matthew may have reproduced traditions that had already localized the claims of 16:17-19 in Peter.

Peter uniquely, but they seem to be generalized to the disciples at other points in the narrative and in Matthean theology. Furthermore, because of Peter's status as "first," Matthew portrays him especially prominently in conjunction with matters that are of supreme importance for the Matthean community, such as halakah and divinely granted authority to administer the kingdom of heaven on earth.

However, in rejecting the position that Peter's unique significance for Matthew is found in his salvation-historical place as "first," we are not rejecting the idea that, for Matthew, Peter was very important in the scheme of salvation-history.

Peter's Significance as Principal Apocalyptic Seer.

Matthew's Gospel was in many ways a Gospel of legitimation. It legitimated Jesus' followers over-against the forms of Judaism from which they emerged.²⁹ More specifically, it legitimated Matthean scribes (at a minimum, Matthew himself) as the true "wise and understanding," over-against their scribal counterparts who remained in close association with the Pharisees and the Jerusalem establishment.³⁰ There are two essential components to the legitimation of Matthean scribes: 1) a polemical contrast between the disciples and the scribes who operated in association with the Pharisees; 2) a demonstration of continuity between the disciples and the Matthean scribes who continue the post-Easter mission.

29. This is evident in the 'Matthean Antitheses': "[T]he gospel, and in particular the antitheses, function as a transformative didactical tractate, which seeks to legitimise the social situation of the community" (Paul Foster, *Community, Law and Mission in Matthew's Gospel* [WUNT 2.177; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004], 141). Perhaps Saldarini is correct to see the Gospel as legitimizing the Matthean community as "deviant Jews" (Anthony J. Saldarini, "The Gospel of Matthew and Jewish-Christian Conflict," in *Social History of the Matthean Community: Cross-Disciplinary Approaches* [David L. Balch; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991], 38).

30. Though one may not agree with each point of his exegesis, Orton cogently argues that Matthew's redaction of the Markan scribes exhibits an intention to reduce the criticism against the scribes as a group, and to redirect any criticism towards Pharasiac scribes or scribes who operate in association with the Pharisees (Orton, *Understanding Scribe*, esp. 24–38). "[T]he scribes per se never stand alone as opponents of Jesus. They are tainted by the company they keep" (Ibid., 28, italics original).

According to Matthew, *revelation* was at the heart of this polemical contrast between the disciples and the scribes and Pharisees. Matthew first makes this point by placing Q 10:21-22 in 11:25-27. We saw that this functions as an exclusionary statement which identifies one group, figurative “children,” as exclusive recipients of revelation, but identifies another group, “the wise and understanding,” as those from whom the Father withheld revelation. We have argued that this exclusionary statement reproduces the terminology and identifications used by the scribes and Pharisees. “Wise and understanding” refers to their presumed status as those who would be able to recognize the work of God in the last days, and who would teach people to live obediently, embodying the sociological status and functions of the groups described with these and similar terms in the apocalypses. As the apocalypses indicate, fidelity to God would characterize such a group, while most other people would disobey God for lack of understanding, being led astray by deception and demonic spirits. In view of this, the eschatological significance of the accusations that John, Jesus, and the Twelve were all agents of Beelzeboul becomes apparent. These accusations were not necessarily acts of desperation to maintain religious and social control; they were attempts by the Pharisees (with whom the scribes are closely aligned throughout the narrative) to uphold their own eschatological function as the “wise and understanding,” carrying out the role that was prescribed in the apocalypses and apocalyptic tradition. However, Matthew’s point in 11:25-27 is that an eschatological role-reversal had occurred. Those who presumed to be the “wise and understanding” had actually failed to perceive the significance of John and Jesus as God’s agents, because the Father had withheld revelation from them. Those who *actually* embodied the eschatological function and status of the “wise and understanding” were the ones whom the scribes and Pharisees viewed as mere “children”—a term which refers to their lack of education in, or obedience to, the Law, and their susceptibility to deception and error. These “children” are the

disciples especially. As Jesus clarifies in 23:15, the scribes and Pharisees are actually sons of hell, who convert others into sons of hell.³¹ Therefore, both sides in this conflict accused the other of acting as agents of Satan.

Matthew centers the contrast between the disciples and the scribes and Pharisees on revelation elsewhere as well. The disciples are the exclusive recipients of the latest edition of eschatological mysteries (13:11-17), which renders the insight of the scribes and Pharisees outmoded and insufficient (13:12, 16-17). The disciples had received a definitive identification of John as Elijah, whose coming the scribes had anticipated, but had failed to recognize (17:10-13; cf. 11:7-19, 25-27). The disciples receive halakah from Jesus which stands as divinely revealed mysteries in contrast with the human tradition of the scribes and Pharisees (15:1-20; 17:24-27; 18:15-35; cf. 5:17-7:12). Moreover, obedience to the halakah and teaching that Jesus revealed is determinative for one's eschatological fate (7:24-27), not one's adherence to the teaching espoused by the scribes, whose authority pales in comparison to that of Jesus (7:28-29). The disciples have the divinely bestowed authority to grant entrance into and exclusion from the kingdom of heaven, in contrast to the scribes and Pharisees (cf. 16:17-19; 18:15-19 to 23:13). The disciples are thus commissioned to carry on the mission of proclaiming the teaching of Jesus and making disciples (10:1-42; 28:18-20). This mission stands as the antithesis to the false prophets who presume to serve the Messiah, who, unlike the disciples, do not realize that Jesus is, in fact, the Messiah whom they will confess on the last day as Lord, Lord (cf. 7:15-23 to 11:25-27; 14:33; 16:13-20; 17:1-13).

31. David E. Garland, *The Intention of Matthew 23* (NovTSup 52; Leiden: Brill, 1979), 129–31, mentions the close connection between the proselytism of the scribes and Pharisees and their teaching. Elsewhere he says: "It is insinuated in chap. 23 that the wrath of God had come upon Israel to the uttermost; and it no longer could lay claim to special status as God's people, not because God had failed, but because Israel had failed. Yet God was not without a special people in the world; the community of believers in Jesus now stood in the former place of Israel" (Ibid., 211–12).

It is clear that Matthew envisages scribes among those who function as leaders of the post-Easter mission to Israel, and probably also the mission to the Gentiles.³² Thus, after Jesus denounces the scribes and Pharisees with seven woes, he promises to send scribes, along with prophets and wise ones, to these scribal and Pharisaic leaders: διὰ τοῦτο ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω πρὸς ὑμᾶς προφῆτας καὶ σοφοὺς καὶ γραμματεῖς (23:34). In addition to this, the episodes of 8:19-22 probably indicate that scribes joined Jesus and the Twelve during his ministry.³³ However, 13:51-52 is the most telling indication that Matthew envisaged a direct link between the disciples and Matthean scribes. The disciples' understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven passes on to scribes who are discipled in the kingdom of heaven, and so have access to new treasures of insight along with what they had already possessed (cf. 13:12). As Orton argues, Matthew likely conceived of himself as an ideal scribe in this sense, and his Gospel transmitted these new treasures to other scribes that would join in the messianic mission.³⁴

In the commissioning (10:1-42) and apocalyptic discourse (24:4-25:46), Jesus warns the Twelve of the persecutions that await them on their mission.³⁵ The post-Easter Matthean scribes experience similar persecution as they continue this mission (23:34-36). Matthew and the scribes among his community therefore stood in continuity with the Twelve over-against their scribal and Pharisaic counterparts in Judaism.

Although the scribes and Pharisees held Moses' seat, taught the Law to Israel, functioned as exegetical and halakic authorities, and constituted the putative "wise and understanding," they were the antagonists of Jesus who were involved in his crucifixion. This was the case because of their exclusion from revelation. However, a

32. Van Tilborg, *Leaders*, 128–41.

33. There is debate about whether both of these potential followers are scribes, and whether both, one, or neither are envisaged as following Jesus. See Gundry, "True and False Disciples".

34. Cf. also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 279–80.

35. Also 16:24-27; 20:22-23.

new line of revelation legitimated Jesus' followers as those who: constituted the true "wise and understanding"; confessed Jesus as the Messiah and John as Elijah; taught and practiced a different halakah; and represented the true sons of Abraham.

Matthew traces this new line of revelation back to the Twelve generally, and to Peter specifically. In Matthew's estimation, the Matthean scribes among his community were analogous to the terminal audience of the apocalypses, who receive an apocalyptic seer's written record of revelations in the last days. These revelations enable them to faithfully fulfill their mission as the eschatological "wise and understanding," and as teachers in the last days. The revelation delivered to these Matthean scribes was rooted in the Twelve generally, and Peter specifically. For Matthew, the Twelve were apocalyptic seers, but Peter was *the principal apocalyptic seer*. This is not to claim that every aspect of Peter's portrayal can be explained in this manner, but it accounts for much.

Matthew alludes to Peter's status as principal apocalyptic seer with the adjective "first" in the listing of those who were commissioned to carry on the work of Jesus as apostles. In the narrative that unfolds, Peter's status as principal apocalyptic seer is demonstrated by his prominence in conjunction with matters that were supremely important for legitimating Matthean scribes over-against their counterparts in Judaism. Peter's prominence is a result of Matthew localizing in him the behavior of an apocalyptic seer that is normally generalized to the Twelve. Thus, when contrasting the human halakah of the scribes and Pharisees with the halakah revealed by the Messiah, the request for explanation is made by Peter.³⁶ Again, Matthew localizes in Peter the expression of cognitive humanity which secures Jesus' teaching about forgiveness (18:21). We might also consider 17:24-27 as further

36. However, Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Matthew* (David B. Green; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), 327, is incorrect to say that "[Peter] receives prominence only when a new understanding of the Law in the community is under discussion (16:19; 17:24; 18:21)...."

evidence for Matthew localizing the role of apocalyptic seer to Peter in episodes involving Jesus' revelation of halakah. Matthew's practice of portraying Peter prominently when matters of halakah are in view was probably a result of his use of inherited tradition (in which this had already occurred), and his aim to associate Peter especially with halakah revealed by Jesus. It should be noted that halakah is not merely a rabbinic concern. The apocalypses frequently emphasize the importance of obedience to the Law among the terminal audience in the last days, which could not be separated from halakah.

Further demonstrating Peter's status as principal apocalyptic seer, Matthew localizes in him several key claims for legitimating the mission of the Matthean scribes. Although Peter was not the only disciple to receive revelation from the Father of Jesus' messianic identity, he is the one whose confession is linked to a break from the Judaism of the scribes and Pharisees. Thus, in Jesus' response to Peter as an individual, constitutive claims for the Matthean community are asserted as the claims of a divine mediator of revelation, namely Jesus, the Christ, Son of the Living God. Peter's confession stands as valid and independent from the scribes and Pharisees; it is associated with Jesus' foundation of the church; it is associated with the eschatological fate of resurrection to life for followers of Jesus; it is associated with earthly custodianship of the kingdom of heaven. It is the moment in Jesus' ministry when revelation authorizes a new sect of Judaism wherein the Matthean scribes administer the kingdom in the post-Easter scenario, participating in, and carrying on, the legacy of the Twelve.

It is as principal apocalyptic seer that Peter's individual cognitive humanity features in his rebuke of Jesus. Peter's view of Jesus' messianic mode was a profoundly human one, but it was the backdrop against which Jesus' predictions of rejection, death, and resurrection are projected as revelation of God's will for the Messiah. It is again in his role as principal apocalyptic seer that Peter's cognitive

humanity features in the transfiguration. He is one of three who receive a vision of Jesus as the glorious Son of Man. He is one of three who receive insight concerning John's identity as Elijah. His unique involvement in this episode, along with James and John, shows these three to be recipients of a special level of revelation, from which even the other members of the Twelve are excluded.

It is as principal apocalyptic seer that Peter secures revelation concerning the personal eschatology of the Twelve (19:27-28), and the personal eschatology of the Matthean scribes who continue their mission (19:29-30), and of the church more generally (16:18). Therefore, Peter was likely remembered as the guarantor of the fate of those who faced persecution and hoped for the resurrection, much like the venerated seers whose personal eschatology was united with that of their apocalypse's terminal audience.

Conclusion

When the traditions that Matthew inherited mixed with the pressures of his situation, a gospel was written which, in part, portrayed Jesus as a mediator of revelation and Peter as principal apocalyptic seer. In this way Matthew employed the rhetoric of the apocalypses to recount the historical ministry of Jesus to Israel. Thus, Matthew does not simply present past events, but he presents revelation stemming from the past, which had significance for those who lived in the last days. Peter was not only characterized as an historical figure in his interaction with Jesus, but he was also portrayed as principal apocalyptic seer, who received revelation *from* Jesus and *of* Jesus, along with the larger circles of Three and Twelve disciples. Peter occupied this position as first among the Twelve, who were apocalyptic seers with him; though none were as prominent in this role as he. Peter and the Twelve thus represented the humans through whom revealed mysteries passed from the divine realm into the human realm and into the possession of the Matthean terminal audience. They were

the antithesis of the scribes and Pharisees, and so operated as the true “wise and understanding,” who would teach the people of God in the last days. The Matthean scribes carried on their legacy, fully legitimated by the revelation stemming from Jesus’ apostles. Their core claims to revelation and authority were localized in Peter, but generalized to the Twelve.

In the end, Matthew’s portrayal of Peter as principal apocalyptic seer is only a byproduct of the significance attached to Jesus. Jesus was the Messiah, Son of the living God, as Peter had so eloquently articulated the revelation thereof. Moreover, Jesus was the Son of Man who fulfilled prophecy and whose eschatological activity was bound up with the kingdom and its mysteries. This identity of Jesus was the reason that Peter and the disciples received revelation from the Father. As this Messiah, Jesus was in a supremely unique relationship to the Father, and so had access to the mysteries of the divine realm, namely those eschatological mysteries associated with the inauguration and consummation of his kingdom, and the matters necessary for the kingdom community to faithfully live in anticipation of his glorious coming. For this reason, Jesus functioned as a divine mediator of revelation in his interaction with the Twelve generally, and Peter specifically. As a divine mediator of revelation, Jesus’ role indeed overlaps with that of teacher and prophet, but entails a special significance for his interaction with the Twelve that these other roles do not: Jesus was one who disclosed the mysteries that were otherwise inaccessible to humans, and he did so to an exclusive group. He did so as the Messiah who broke the ontological mold that constrained all other teachers and prophets. As the Messiah, Jesus was one whom people could not fully recognize apart from revelation from the Father. Within this matrix of Jesus’ identity as Messiah and his function as divine mediator of revelation, the disciples appear as apocalyptic seers, and Peter emerges from them as principal apocalyptic seer.

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